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The Gorilla

A MYSTERY COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

by Ralph Spence

Property of
FLORIDA PLAYERS

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THE GORILLA

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THE GORILLA

STORY OF THE PLAY

Arthur Marsden is a dramatist specializing in mystery plays. His sweetheart, Alice Denby, living with her uncle in a funny old house, thinks Mr. Stevens might back a play if he were to become interested in it. Arthur reads the play to him, and, as he reads, many weird things happen. The Gorilla of the title is both the criminal hero of the play and a real ape escaped from a ship. The spirit is one of satire. Most of the fun is furnished by a pair of hard-boiled detectives, Mulligan and Garrity. This play had a long and successful run in New York and all the large cities of the United States, besides touring. It was also highly successful in England. This version is revised and simplified for amateurs.

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THE GORILLA

A play in three acts by Ralph Spence. Produced by Donald Gallaher at the Selwyn Theatre, New York, April 28, 1925.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

JEFFERSON LEE ..... *Stephen Maley*
CYRUS STEVENS ..... *Frederick Truesdell*
ALICE DENBY ..... *Betty Weston*
ARTHUR MARSDEN ..... *Robert Strange*
MR. MULLIGAN ..... *Clifford Dempsey*
MR. GARRITY ..... *Frank McCormack*
SIMMONS ..... *Frank Beaston*
THE STRANGER ..... *Harry Southard*
A SAILOR ..... *Joseph Guthrie*
POE ..... *Harry A. Ward*
DR. WILNER ..... *George Spelvin*

Acts I, II, and III.—Home of Cyrus Stevens, Long Island.

Staged by Walter F. Scott.

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THE GORILLA

CAST OF CHARACTERS
(In order of appearance)
(9 males; 2 females)

JEFFERSON LEE. *A Southern Negro butler, slightly past middle-age. Has Southern dialect but is not the exaggerated satchel-mouth type of the Neil O'Brien era.*

CYRUS STEVENS. *A retired businessman of about 55. Distinguished-looking, amiable.*

ALICE DENBY. *Very pretty and very sensible. Bryn Mawr graduate. (First set climax requires her to give a PIERCING scream).*

ARTHUR MARSDEN. *Personable, educated and about 36 years old.*

MR. MULLIGAN. *Middle-aged, brawny detective. Important to keep in mind that this part is NOT FOR A COMEDIAN. He is earnest and fearless, and gets his laughs because, despite his scrupulous observance of duty, he is quite dumb.*

MR. GARRITY. *Mulligan's partner (comedian's part). Pretends to be brave, but isn't.*

ILKA SIMMONS. *Good looking, brunette, sophisticated. A girl reporter who is hep.*

THE STRANGER. *Intelligent type with a sense of humor. But capable of being very tough.*

THE SAILOR. *First-class seaman, U.S.N. Striped for four major engagements in World War II.*

POE. *Athletic. (Works in gorilla costume).*

DR. WILNER. *A small town physician. About 45.*

In this version the character of SIMMONS *is changed to a female.*

If desired, the part of JEFFERSON LEE *can (with slight dialogue alterations) be played by a colored woman, or a white woman with a deep Southern accent.*

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The Gorilla

ACT ONE

SCENE: *Living room of an ancestral home on Long Island.*

Double doors at Right Center leading to front entrance, hall and stairway. At lower landing of stairway is a stained-glass window which can be opened. Door Right 1, leading to dining room. Door to closet Right 2. Arch at back Left Center, leading to French window. Open fireplace down Left with large oval framed portrait Old Lady above it. A large, 6-foot chest up Left with lock. A caribou head with rambling antlers on wall above chest. Above chest a chair. A high secretary desk, with flowers on it, stands up Center between the double doors and arch. A small chair stands in front of it. Above secretary is a large oval framed painting. On secretary a telephone. Against back wall, Right of double doors, is a Grecian pithos—a giant earthenware vase used by the ancients for storage of wine or burial of dead bodies. Between the dining room door and closet is a cabinet radio. On it is a small glass vase. Next to radio is a chair. A folding screen up Right.

A small library table stands Center with lamp, book-ends, books, a newspaper and a few magazines. Right of table Center is a large overstuffed armchair. Near it is a coffee table. At Left of table Center is a straight chair. An open-backed armchair at fireplace Left; fire grate, irons, etc. at fireplace, but no screen.

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The room is furnished after the substantial custom of forty years ago, having served as a living room in the real sense of the phrase.

TIME: *About 11:20 at night.*

AT RISE: *The stage is dark—except for a stream of light from room Right 1 which shines across the stage disclosing the fireplace, chest and part of radio.*

In a quiet voice, Frank Sinatra is singing "Sunday, Monday and Always" over the radio. (Perhaps we hear this a few seconds before the curtain rises.)

RADIO ANNOUNCER. *(Cutting in and dimming out Sinatra's voice)* Sorry to interrupt—but we're a little late. We now bring you Dr. William Henry Smithson, who will deliver the third of his series of lectures on spiritualism, entitled "Let's Talk To A Ghost."

(On the final words of the above JEFF, *a colored butler, enters Right 1. He carries a tray with cocktail container and glasses. He pauses a brief moment, listening. Then he crosses to table Center, his shadow showing on Left wall as he goes.)*

RADIO ANNOUNCER. *(Introducing speaker)* Dr. Smithson.

DR. SMITHSON. *(Over radio)* As I said last week, there is an abundance of evidence that the dead do visit us in ectoplasmic form. (JEFF *faces front, eyes thoughtful)* The spirits of the departed are with us frequently. How often have you sensed the presence of someone in a room with you — specially in the dark? (JEFF *pulls the chain of the table lamp, lighting it. LIGHTS up to a glow; no foots)* Yes, my friends, they walk with us and they talk with us. (JEFF *is a little apprehensive, but tries to smile it off)* If you should hear a mysterious

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tapping; or, to take a more tangible instance: If, for no apparent reason, you should see a chair move—

JEFF. (JEFF *looks at straight chair Left of table Center; then turns away with a triumphant shrug, faces left oblique and starts stirring cocktail. With a disdainful smirk)* Silly.

(The chair moves quietly about three feet without JEFF *seeing it. He turns back and starts pouring cocktail. Notices that chair has moved to other end of table. He has a very slow take as he quietly puts down shaker, his eyes reflecting grave misgivings.)*

DR. SMITHSON. *(Continuing)* —please be assured that such manifestations are not only common but are without ominous significance.

(CYRUS STEVENS *enters Right 1. He is a pleasant, practical man of about 55. He is neatly but comfortably dressed, and his left hand is totally covered by a bandage. As the lecture continues he crosses to the radio, without* JEFF *seeing him.)*

DR. SMITHSON. *(Continuing)* It is merely the spirit of some unhappy person seeking your companionship. Nothing portentious about it at all. He might even whisper your name —

STEVENS. *(Quietly, as he turns off radio)* Jeff. (JEFF *jumps, almost dropping the shaker. Seeing* STEVENS, *he laughs inanely.* STEVENS *crosses to him)* What's the matter with you?

JEFF. Excuse me, Mr. Stevens. I — I thought you was somethin' else.

STEVENS. *(Gives his a brief, puzzled look, then picks up cocktail)* Martini?

JEFF. Yes, suh.

STEVENS. Sure you made it dry enough this time?

JEFF. Yes, suh. It's so dry it's almost dusty.

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STEVENS. *(Tasting it)* Mm! You're improving. Didn't the folks down South have Martinis?

JEFF. *(As* STEVENS *drinks)* No, suh. They had mint juleps — that is, all except Miss Alice. She never liked 'em.

STEVENS. I don't blame her. *(Goes to Right of table)* I concede the dignity of bourbon but mint belongs in chewing gum.

JEFF. *(Tentatively)* Mr. Stevens — me havin' worked for Miss Alice's family so long, and you bein' her uncle — is it all right if I ask you a question?

STEVENS. *(Glancing at a couple of unopened letters)* Go ahead.

JEFF. How old is this house?

STEVENS. *(Pridefully)* It's the oldest house on Long Island. My great-grandfather built it one hundred and four years ago.

JEFF. *(At armchair Center)* Er — did anybody ever die in it?

STEVENS. *(Casually)* Oh, yes. When I was a child— nearly fifty years ago — we found Grandpa with his eyes fixed on that portrait — *(Points Left)* He had gone to his reward quietly, serenely — sitting in that chair.

(JEFF *quickly moves away from armchair Center.* STEVENS *sits in it and picks up a newspaper.)*

JEFF. *(Gulps)* Er — have you seen him around lately?

STEVENS. *(A quizzical look)* He's dead.

JEFF. Yes, suh — that's what I mean. That is, I mean — Mr. Stevens, there's ha'nts in this house.

STEVENS. What?

JEFF. Ghosts! It's full of 'em.

STEVENS. *(Amused)* Impossible. I had the place fumigated last week.

JEFF. Then it didn't take. *(Turns, looks about, moves to Right Center doors and looks out.* STEVENS *opens his*

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newspaper so that audience sees block letter headline: "GORILLA TRAP FAILS." JEFF *crosses quietly back and speaks over Stevens' left shoulder.)* Yesterday I was fixin' things around in the attic — sort of hummin' a tune to myself — and a voice behind me says, "You may be happy now, but wait till next Thursday!" *(Swallows hard and looks about; loud whisper)* And this is Thursday!

STEVENS *(Preoccupied with newspaper)* All right. So it's Thursday. *(Takes cigar from humidor)* Have you heard from Miss Alice?

JEFF. *(Crosses Left of table Center)* Yes, suh. She 'phoned that she was havin' dinner in town with Mr. — er —

STEVENS. Marsden?

JEFF. Yes, suh. Mr. Marsden. She said they'd drive out here a little later.

STEVENS. I hope it isn't much later. *(Glances at watch)* Late hours wear me down.

JEFF. Mr. Stevens, do you think Miss Alice likes that young man?

STEVENS. *(Sharply)* It's highly improper for you to discuss such a thing.

JEFF. Excuse me, suh.

STEVENS. So we'll discuss it. *(Rises and tosses newspaper on table)* Yes, I think she likes him — unfortunately. *(Goes Left of table)* And I mean *unfortunately!* He's an unproduced playwright— *(Thoughtfully)* —and that's the worst kind of playwright.

JEFF. What's a playwright, Mr. Stevens?

STEVENS. A misguided soul who thinks up all the things the actors and actresses do.

JEFF. You don't say!

STEVENS. On the stage, I mean — not in the newspapers.

JEFF. And that's worse — ain't it?

STEVENS. *(Musing)* Out of thousands of earnest, energetic young men, she picks an — an unsung poet. *(Auto HORN off Right)* And there they are! *(Re-*

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signedly — as he goes to Right of table) Well, I suppose there's no escape — she's going to make me listen to that young author's play.

JEFF. *(Sympathetically)* Oh, that's too bad, suh! Is there anything *I* can do?

STEVENS. *(Weighing the possibility)* Well — you might steal his manuscript. *(Brightens; then shakes head)* No, that won't do. Just see that there's Scotch and cigars.

JEFF. Yes, suh.

(JEFF *starts meticulously tidying the room, unnecessarily adjusting chairs, etc. During this action he turns on the RADIO and Sinatra's voice comes on again singing "Sunday, Monday and Always.")*

STEVENS. Does that fellow sing *all* the time?

SINATRA'S VOICE. *(Singing)* Sunday, Monday and Always.

(The VOICE starts to fade out quickly.)

ANNOUNCER. Sorry to interrupt. We've just received a request from Police Headquarters to broadcast the following: Quote. The reward for information leading to the arrest of the fiendish and elusive criminal known as The Gorilla has been increased to ten thousand dollars. The police department has been working at great disadvantage because of the lack of public cooperation. We realize that this is largely due to fear of retaliation, but if you have reason to believe that you have any evidence at all, you may be assured that it will be treated with strictest confidence. The full facilities of the police department are being directed toward the apprehension of this dangerous marauder — but we need *your* help. Unquote. And that, ladies and gentlemen, is signed by the Police Commissioner. *(Throughout this announcement* STEVENS *stands listening thoughtfully.* JEFF

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listens near doorway Right Center) The program will continue.

(STEVENS *switches radio off.)*

(Front DOOR opening off Right Center is heard, together with laughter of ALICE *and* MARSDEN)

ALICE. *(Off)* and Uncle said, "I've retired to this rundown old house and I just want to run down with it."

(They laugh.)

MARSDEN. Say — it's eleven-thirty. Your uncle won't want to listen to a —

ALICE. Don't worry about him. He *loves* to stay up all night.

(STEVENS *reacts to the above line.* ALICE DENBY, *a very pretty girl, smartly dressed, enters Right Center folowed by* ARTHUR MARSDEN, *whose age is about thirty-eight. He carries a briefcase containing a manuscript. FOOTLIGHTS up a little.)*

ALICE. *(Brightly)* Hello, Jeff.

JEFF. Good evenin', Miss Alice.

ALICE. Is my uncle — *(Sees* STEVENS) Oh, there you are, darling! *(Goes to him Center)* It's a shame — leaving you alone in this dreary old house.

STEVENS. *(Smiling)* "They are never alone who are accompanied by noble thoughts." Know who said that?

ALICE. No, but he couldn't have lived on Long Island. *(Making introductions)* Arthur, this is my uncle, Cyrus Stevens, Arthur Marsden.

(They exchange "How do you do's," JEFF *watching* MARSDEN *critically as they do so.)*

MARSDEN. Please forgive us for being so late.

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ALICE. *(Left Center)* We went to the flea circus.

STEVENS. Flea circus?

ALICE. Yes. You should see it. Fifteen in the cast.

MARSDEN. All off the same dog.

JEFF. *(At door Right 1. — to himself)* Unhung playwright!

(MARSDEN, *Right Center, looks toward* JEFF, *who exits quickly Right 1.)*

MARSDEN. *(Moving up Right Center — looking about)* This wonderful old house fascinates me.

ALICE. *(Moves above table to* STEVENS) Arthur says he'd like to write a play around it.

STEVENS. *(To table Center)* I wish he'd write a fence around it. *(To* MARSDEN) We've been in it only a week. Little chance of repairing anything in *these* times.

ALICE. *(Sees bandaged hand)* Oh, your poor hand! How heartless of me not to inquire about it.

STEVENS. It's much better, thank you.

ALICE. But I *must* change the bandage.

STEVENS. It's all right. Jeff changed it at noon. *(To* MARSDEN) A scratch of some sort I received the day we came here. Seems to have become slightly infected.

ALICE. And why? *(To* MARSDEN) Because he wouldn't let *me* take care of it. *(Takes briefcase from* MARSDEN) Here's the play, Unc. *(Puts it on table)* Now please listen closely — you'll have to concentrate. It's quite deep.

STEVENS. *(Smiles)* I'll do my best.

ALICE. *(Looks at him affectionately)* You know something, Unc?—You're sweet. *(Turns)* Good night, Arthur.

STEVENS. Where are you going?

ALICE. To bed, of course. It'll take *hours* to read the play.

STEVENS. *(A bit worried)* But — hadn't you better stay here and help me listen?

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ALICE. No. I've heard it — and I love it. And so will you. *(Comes closer to* STEVENS; *contritely)* Unc. I know it's terribly selfish of me, but I've deprived *you* of springing the surprise.

STEVENS. Surprise? What surprise?

ALICE. I've already told Arthur you're going to produce it.

STEVENS. Now wait a minute! I didn't say I'd produce it.

ALICE. But you will, darling. *(Pats his cheek)* You will.

MARSDEN. *(Laughs)* But, Alice — Mr. Stevens hasn't heard it yet.

ALICE. As if that makes any difference! *(To* STEVENS) I know a Mr. Rabis from Hollywood. He says they never read *anything* out there. They haven't time. If it costs enough they buy it.

STEVENS. Now, Alice — I don't know anything about plays.

ALICE. Oh, you don't have to know anything about them, darling. All you need is enough money to hire somebody — actors — stagehands. You know — buy a lot of things. Then get a theatre and hire a band. It's all very simple — isn't it, Arthur?

MARSDEN. *(Nods)* And simple people are doing it.

STEVENS. But I —

ALICE. I'm only trying to help you to be happy, Unc. I told Arthur how things are — that you have loads of money and nothing to do. You need something to toy around with.

STEVENS. *(Testily)* I don't want to toy around with anything. I've retired and I'm going to *stay* retired.

ALICE. *(To* MARSDEN) He talks that way all the time. You'd think he meant it.

MARSDEN. I rather think he does.

STEVENS. I'm sure you understand my position, Mr. Marsden. I'll be glad to listen to your play — but my whole program of doing nothing would be upset by an investment of *any* kind.

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ALICE. *(Exasperated; crosses to him)* Darling — don't you understand? This isn't an investment. It's a hobby. You won't be worried with a lot of silly profits. *(To* MARSDEN) Why, only yesterday he was complaining about not having any deductions for his income tax. *(To* STEVENS) This is wonderful for that sort of thing!

STEVENS. *(Weakening)* How much would it take?

ALICE. A mere fifty thousand.

STEVENS. That isn't mere enough. I might go twenty-five.

ALICE. *(To* MARSDEN) See how easy it is? From nothing he's up to twenty-five thousand already. You won't have any trouble. *(Kisses* STEVENS *lightly)* Good night, Unc.

(As ALICE *starts toward doors Right Center* STEVENS *looks after her, then crosses to table Center.)*

STEVENS. I've always made it a rule not to go into anything I didn't understand. (ALICE *turns and beckons to* MARSDEN. *He crosses to her at Right Center)* And if there's anything I don't understand it's the show business.

ALICE. *(Low voice)* Don't pay any attention to him. He's just inexperienced enough to know what the public wants.

MARSDEN. But is he inexperienced enough to put up the money?

ALICE. It'll be all right. *(To* STEVENS) Good night, tightwad. *(Goes to stairway and turns)* Don't forget, Arthur, we're to go horseback riding at six in the morning.

STEVENS. *(Crossing Left Center)* I'm glad it's you this time. She had me out yesterday. *(Winces)* I feel like I'd spent a weekend in a jeep.

ALICE. *(Starts up stairway)* Unc — your check book is in the right hand drawer. *(As she goes)* The fountain pen is right on top of it. *(Exits.)*

STEVENS. *(Looks after* ALICE *for a moment, then*

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turns to MARSDEN) The first time I saw her she was two days old — sputtering and blowing little bubbles and demanding attention. The next time I saw her was a week ago — and she's still demanding attention.

(They laugh and cross toward table Right Center. JEFF *enters Right 1 and goes to closet Right 2 where he takes a rather flashy dressing gown from a hanger.)*

MARSDEN. *(As he starts opening briefcase on table Center)* I realize this is an imposition, Mr. Stevens. It's so late —

STEVENS. *(As he sits in armchair Center)* Oh, that's all right. I'm interested to know how you write. Of course I know Alice has already given you the Pulitzer Prize, the Nobel Prize and — whatever it is they give in Hollywood. *(Turning to* JEFF, *who has come down Center with dressing gown)* Jeff, give Mr. Marsden a drink.

MARSDEN. No, thanks, I'll have one a little later.

JEFF. *(Holding out dressing gown)* Will you put this on, suh?

STEVENS. Yes— *(Takes jacket off —* JEFF *helps him with dressing gown)* — be careful of that hand.

JEFF. Yes, suh.

MARSDEN. *(As he takes script from briefcase)* You know — they say that one play in a thousand is worth producing.

STEVENS. *(As he gets into dressing gown)* Then why isn't it produced? *(Winces)* Careful, Jeff!

(MARSDEN *turns and squints at the loud dressing gown — while* JEFF *goes to closet and places* STEVENS' *jacket on a hanger.* MARSDEN *is a little embarrassed when* STEVENS *catches his looking critically at dressing gown.)*

MARSDEN. I — I was just admiring your dressing gown.

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STEVENS. *(Looks toward stairway, cocks one eyebrow humorously — then in a loud whisper)* It's a birthday present. I *have* to wear it. *(They smile;* STEVENS *sees script in* MARSDEN'S *hand)* Is that the play?

MARSDEN. That's it. The result of much midnight oil.

STEVENS. *(Takes the bulky script and weighs it in his hand)* Feels like a good one. *(Riffles it; squints at a page)* After all, you must have put some thought into this.

MARSDEN. Yes. Once in a while that *happens* to a play.

STEVENS. *(Hands script to* MARSDEN) I suppose you want to start reading it now?

MARSDEN. Whenever you're ready.

STEVENS. *(Turns)* Jeff, you'd better stay up for a while. *(Sits in arm chair.)*

JEFF. Yes, suh. *(Exits Right 1.)*

STEVENS. *(Leaning back comfortably)* I saw a show about a month ago — what they call an escapist play. I don't know why, unless it's because the audience tried to escape from it.

MARSDEN. *(Smiles)* Probably too flimsy. *(Takes straight chair Left of table and sits.)*

STEVENS. I think you've hit it. I remember now — the critics said it fell apart.

MARSDEN. They've got to have *some* foundation. I've noticed that many successful plays are based on actual happenings. With that in mind, I've built mine around the latest criminal sensation — The Gorilla.

STEVENS. *(With interest)* The Gorilla? You mean you — *(Musingly)* The Gorilla, eh?

MARSDEN. I hope you don't object to that type of thing.

STEVENS. *(Abstractedly)* Huh? — Oh, no. No, indeed. *(Turning)* Sinister character, that Gorilla. Barbarous, inhuman —

MARSDEN. And I've written him just as he is — the

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most ruthless criminal this country has ever known.

STEVENS. *(Pause. Faces front; quietly)* Marsden, do you know anything about The Gorilla? *(Turns)* I mean, have you ever seen him?

MARSDEN. Well, no — but I've followed his record rather closely; studied his habits and haunts. Enough, I think, to make a rather interesting analysis of him. *(Earnestly)* I've always had a desire to help the police *get* that fellow.

STEVENS. *(Rises)* I'm awfully glad to hear you say that, Marsden. *(Looks at* MARSDEN *for a moment; then quietly)* And I hope you mean it.

MARSDEN. *(Puzzled)* Of course I do. *(Looks at* STEVENS, *concerned. Rises)* Mr. Stevens, is there something?

(STEVENS *silences him with a gesture and crosses up Right Center, looks up the stairs, crosses down to Right of table Center and opens drawer. He takes out paper and lays it on table before* MARSDEN.)

STEVENS. Have you ever seen that before?

MARSDEN. *(Looks at it, reacts in amazement, then up at* STEVENS) The Gorilla's hand print! *(Pause)* Where did you get this?

STEVENS. *(Tense)* Read it.

MARSDEN. *(Reads paper — looks up)* Why, The Gorilla is coming *here* — tonight at twelve o'clock!

STEVENS. Exactly. And he's coming here to *get me.* You know what that means.

MARSDEN. I know what it *has* meant to several persons. They vanished from the face of the earth.

STEVENS. *(Pause.* STEVENS *turns, looks at* MARSDEN, *then moves Right of armchair)* The night after we moved into this house I found that warning on my pillow. I was awakened by a sharp pain in this hand. It had been badly clawed or bitten. I caught just a glimpse of something leaping through the window —

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MARSDEN. But the Gorilla is not an animal, Mr. Stevens. He's a man of super-intellect. The police have found out *that* much.

STEVENS. *(Crosses to front of table. Picks up paper)* Then how do the police account for all these perfect prints of a gorilla's hand that are found wherever he operates?

MARSDEN. They *don't* account for them.

STEVENS. Would *you,* by any chance, have a theory?

MARSDEN. I'm afraid not. Except, of course, that the handprints weren't made by a real gorilla.

STEVENS. No? *(Drops paper on table)* I had that imprint examined by an expert — a laboratory test. *(Pause — he looks at* MARSDEN) The analysis showed that it was made by a real gorilla and could not have been made by artificial means. *(Pause. He backs to chair Right of table)* Marsden, I'm not the most courageous man in the world; neither am I a coward. I've kept this thing as quiet as possible — on account of Alice. But I don't mind telling you — it's shattered my nerves. (JEFF *enters Right with Scotch and soda; slams door)* Will you please stop doing that! *(Sits Right of table.)*

JEFF. Excuse me, suh. *(Puts tray on table)* Is there anything else?

MARSDEN. Not now, Jeff. *(Picks up hand print — Crosses to Right Center)* Mr. Stevens doesn't want to be disturbed for a while.

JEFF. *(Backs toward Right 1 door)* Yes, suh.

(Gives a puzzled, apprehensive look toward STEVENS, *then stares at* MARSDEN. *Sensing that* JEFF *hasn't left,* MARSDEN *turns and looks Right 1.* JEFF *quickly exits, closing the door.)*

MARSDEN. *(Turns, studies print a moment)* Mr. Stevens, surely you didn't expect to sit here and face this thing alone? (JEFF *opens door Right 1 quietly and listens)* I'll notify the police.

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STEVENS. I've done that. Detectives have been on the grounds since sunset.

MARSDEN. Oh. Would you mind telling me *why* The Gorilla has threatened you?

STEVENS. I have something he wants.

MARSDEN. What?

STEVENS. This house.

MARSDEN. This house? What does he want with it?

(JEFF *exits Right 1., closes the door)*

STEVENS. I haven't the slightest idea. It's been closed for more than ten years.

MARSDEN. *(Suddenly)* I've an idea! Van Cleave of Scotland Yard is working on The Gorilla case — by invitation of the New York Police Department.

STEVENS. So I've read.

MARSDEN. We'll send for *him.*

STEVENS. I did — and he refused to come.

MARSDEN. Refused? Why?

STEVENS. I talked to his secretary. He told me they had half a dozen such requests every day. He said The Gorilla had threatened to appear at *five different places* at twelve o'clock tonight.

MARSDEN. *(Goes back of table Left Center)* Yes — that's his usual method. It splits up the Central office men.

STEVENS. Clever of him, I suppose. *(Indicates hand-print)* Buy why does he have to go through this infernal press agenting?

MARSDEN. *(To Left of table Center — puts paper on table)* A psychiatrist could give you a break-down on that in a few minutes. It's an advanced phase of paranoia. The Gorilla has the egocentric's flare for the spectacular — danger fascinates him.

STEVENS. *(Nervously)* You'll see this through, won't you, Marsden?

MARSDEN. Of course I will. *(Crosses, puts hand on* STEVENS' *shoulder)* Come now — you must relax a

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little. How do we know this threat isn't one of the four bluffs he has thrown out tonight?

STEVENS. *(Extends his left hand)* None of the others had *this.*

MARSDEN. *(Thoughtfully)* Yes — I suppose that's true. *(Turns)* Don't you think you should have vacated the house for a while?

STEVENS. *(Pause)* I know you're not going to understand this, Marsden. You see, my great-grandfather built this house — three generations of Stevenses have been born and raised here. I promised my mother I'd live here as long as the old house held together. Well — *(Spreading his hands in a gesture)* — I didn't do it. I've been away for twenty-five years. When I decided to retire, that thing we call conscience started pecking at me. So here I am — and here I had hoped to stay.

MARSDEN. But aren't sentiments of that kind a little dated?

STEVENS. *(With a sigh)* I suppose so.

MARSDEN. What about Alice? Do you think it's fair to subject her to a danger of this kind — for the sake of a silly sentiment? (STEVENS *gives him a look)* I'm sorry — I didn't mean to be impertinent.

STEVENS. *(After a moment)* Marsden, do you love my niece?

MARSDEN. *(Confused)* Well, really, Mr. Stevens — I've known Alice less than a week. I hope you don't think I'm precocious enough to —

STEVENS. Please forget the proprieties and answer me — *(Taps bell on table) — do you love my niece?*

MARSDEN. *(A pause, then:)* Yes.

JEFF. *(Enters Right 1.)* Did you want me, suh?

STEVENS. Ask Miss Alice to come down here — as quickly as possible!

JEFF. *(Puzzled)* Yes, suh — *(Crosses up Right Center — turns and looks.)*

STEVENS. *(Turning to* JEFF) I said hurry!

JEFF. Yes, suh — *(He turns and scoots up the stairs)* Yes, *suh.*

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MARSDEN. *(Quickly, as he crosses to Center)* What are you going to do?

STEVENS. You've just told me that you love Alice. Now I'm going to find out if she loves *you.*

MARSDEN. Mr. Stevens — isn't this just a bit irregular?

STEVENS. A lot of irregular things may happen here tonight, Mardsen. I'm doing what I think is proper — whether you like it or not. I assume that you expect to marry Alice?

MARSDEN. I hope to — yes. But it just happens that I've never mentioned the matter to her. Even *I* haven't had the indelicacy to rush her through a —

STEVENS. *(Cutting in)* I'll relieve you of that embarrassment. Now don't think I'm eccentric, Marsden. I'm in a serious situation — and I know it. I worship my niece — and if anything should —

ALICE. *(Rushes downstairs excitedly. She wears a dressing gown and her long hair is down)* Unc! What's the matter? *(Crosses down Center to* MARSDEN) Anything wrong?

STEVENS. *(Quieting down)* No, my dear. Just a little matter I wanted to get settled. *(He and* MARSDEN *exchange looks)* Mr. Marsden has just told me that he loves you.

ALICE. *(Looks from one to the other. Finally speaks)* I see — so you're relaying it to me. A sort of pony express system.

MARSDEN. I'm sorry, Alice — I hope you're not going to be angry.

ALICE. No. Only I don't think information of that kind usually reaches a girl in a roundabout way. It sort of loses its impact — like an electrical transcription.

MARSDEN. *(To* STEVENS) Now — do you see what you've done? — Alice, this wasn't my idea —

STEVENS. Just a moment — please! Alice, there are certain reasons that compel me to ask you if you love this young man?

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ALICE. And there are certain reasons that compel me to say that he could ask that question for himself — I *hope!*

STEVENS. Now don't be childish.

ALICE. *(Angrily)* I'm not being childish!

MARSDEN. *(To* STEVENS) Please — for heaven's sake let me take it from here! *(Crosses to* ALICE) Alice, I've loved you since the first moment I saw you. I adore you — I feel that I'm wasting my time when I'm not looking at you! Do you love me?

ALICE. Don't be absurd. Of course I do!

MARSDEN. Darling! *(They embrace.)*

STEVENS. *(Turning — quietly)* Thanks very much.

ALICE. *(As they break the embrace she turns to* STEVENS) Will that be all?

STEVENS. Just one thing more — *(To* MARSDEN) If anything happens to me here tonight I want to know that you'll marry Alice and give her the protection she needs.

MARSDEN. That's the easiest promise I ever made.

ALICE. *(Impatiently)* Will you *please* tell me what you're talking about!

MARSDEN. *(Solemnly)* Alice — your uncle has been threatened.

ALICE. Threatened? By whom?

STEVENS. The Gorilla.

ALICE. *(Incredulous)* The Gorilla! *(She brightens and smiles)* Oh, I see — you're ribbing me. You've been reading your play and —

MARSDEN. *(Quietly)* No, Alice—it's true. *(Hands her paper)* When The Gorilla sends in this card, he usually means it.

(JEFF *enters from stairway Right Center and goes toward Right 1.)*

ALICE. *(Looking at paper)* The Gorilla — coming here? *(She stares at* STEVENS. JEFF *freezes)* But,

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Uncle — you didn't mention this thing to me! Why haven't you notified the police?

STEVENS. I have. Two detectives are watching the house now.

ALICE. But why should this horrible person — or thing — or whatever he is — molest you? If it's money he wants, why —

(DOORBELL rings. Pause. ALL *look at one another.* STEVENS *to above chair Right table.* JEFF *starts to tiptoe off Right 1.)*

STEVENS. *(Sharply)* Answer the door, Jeff.

JEFF. *(Turns — speaks huskily)* Yes, suh.

MARSDEN *(Crosses to Right Center)* Perhaps I'd better —

(ALICE *crosses to chair Right of table.)*

STEVENS. No — let Jeff do it. *(Turns up to above chair Right of table.* ALICE *sinks in chair.* STEVENS *turns to* JEFF) And see that the chain is hooked.

JEFF. *(Scared)* Y-y-yes, suh! *(Reluctantly starts toward door Right Center, then turns)* Of course, Mr. Marsden is *company* here — and if he *wants* to open the door —

(Long and impatient ring of DOORBELL)

STEVENS. *(Sternly)* Answer that door!

JEFF. Y-y-yes, suh — yes, suh. *(Exits slowly.)*

(Pause. MARSDEN *looks at* ALICE. STEVENS *crosses to Left Center.)*

ALICE. *(To* MARSDEN) Do you think it could be —

MARSDEN. Sh-h-h!

(Pause. MARSDEN *looks at her, then at his watch.*

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ALICE *rises, crosses to* STEVENS *Left Center, puts her hand on his arm.* MARSDEN *crosses to Right 1.* JEFF *enters Right Center.)*

JEFF. *(Announcing)* Mr. Mulligan and Mr. Garrity.

(Turns light switch on Right wall. LIGHTS. Foot and border up to mark — brackets on — all spots on — as set) *LIGHTS*

STEVENS. *(To* MARSDEN *and* ALICE*)* The two detectives.

(MULLIGAN *and* GARRITY *enter Right Center shoulder to shoulder and cross down Right Center. Pause.* MULLIGAN *is the taller of the two, but both are heavy set, hard-boiled types of detectives. They are partners, but it is evident that* GARRITY *looks to* MULLIGAN *for leadership.* MULLIGAN *is earnest, conscientious and fearless (should be played by dramatic actor, not a comedian) but is quite dumb. He wears a closely cropped mustache and a faded straw hat.)*

MULLIGAN. *(To* STEVENS*)* Gettin' long toward midnight. Thought we'd better come in and get set for whatever's comin' off. Want to look around the house a little anyway.

STEVENS. Yes — I'm glad you came in, Mr. Mulligan. This is my niece, Miss Denby.

MULLIGAN. Pleased to meetcha. *(Touches his hat like it was a hot stove. Turns to* GARRITY*)* P-s-s-t! (GARRITY *turns toward group)* My partner, Garrity.

ALICE. How do you do?

GARRITY. *(With a slight motion of the hand)* Aw — that's all right.

ALICE. *(Embarrassed pause)* Mr. Mulligan and Mr. Garrity, this is Mr. Marsden.

MULLIGAN. Howdy?

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MARSDEN. How do you do?

(MULLIGAN *nudges* GARRITY)

GARRITY. *(Turns to* MARSDEN) Yeh-yeh — okay.

MARSDEN. It's rather comforting to know that you gentlemen are here.

GARRITY. You said it!

(JEFF *exits Right 1 quietly.* ALICE *to chair Left of table.)*

MARSDEN. *(Trying to be cheerful)* Now you see, Alice — there's really nothing to worry about.

MULLIGAN. *(To* STEVENS, *jerks his thumb toward* MARSDEN) Does *he* have to be here?

STEVENS. Mr. Marsden is a very good friend of ours.

MULLIGAN. What's his racket?

STEVENS. He's a playwright.

MULLIGAN. Oh — a — *(To* MARSDEN) — playwright, eh? *(Crosses to* MARSDEN, *Right)* So you're one of those guys that always puts us detectives on the stage with derby hats — *(Pause)* — and makes us wisecrackin' but all wrong. You'd think us guys didn't have no education a-tall.

MARSDEN. I'm sure you're wrong, Mr. Mulligan. Some of the best known stage heroes have been detectives.

MULLIGAN. I'll bet it wasn't *your* fault.

MARSDEN. No. None of my plays has been produced yet.

MULLIGAN. *(Sarcastically)* Oh, so you're one of them guys, eh? *(Looks at* GARRITY.)

GARRITY. *(A disdainful laugh)* Heh, heh, heh!

MULLIGAN. *(To* MARSDEN) Well anyway — I'm kinda glad you're here, at that. If this Gorilla guy shows up it'll give you a chance to find out that *all* dicks ain't *dopes. (Turns to* GARRITY, *who makes an approving circle with his thumb and forefinger.)*

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MARSDEN. I hope so. *(Getting down to business)* Now, as I understand it —

MULLIGAN. You don't understand it. And I don't want you to try — get me?

STEVENS. But Mr. Marsden has had some experience in criminology.

MULLIGAN. Well, he'll have some more after he watches *us* work for a while. *(Looks at* GARRITY, *who again makes a circle with his thumb and forefinger.)*

MARSDEN. *(To* MULLIGAN) Your partner hasn't much to say, has he?

MULLIGAN. *(Center; front table)* A lot of guys get along with me that way.

(GARRITY *turns and gives* MARSDEN *a dirty look.)*

JEFF. *(Enters Right 1 and speaks tremulously)* Miss Alice, do you mind if I —

MULLIGAN. *(Turns — sees* JEFF) Who's the eight-ball?

STEVENS. He's our butler.

MULLIGAN. *(Turns to* GARRITY) P-s-s-t! (GARRITY *comes down Right Center)* Question him, Garrity. *(Moves up Right Center above chair Right of table Center.)*

(MARSDEN *crosses to back of table.)*

GARRITY. *(To* JEFF) Come here! (JEFF *hesitates)* Come on! Come on! Come on! —

JEFF. Yes, suh. *(Crosses to* GARRITY *Right Center.)*

GARRITY. *(A little puzzled as to how to begin)* Er—er — What's your name?

JEFF. Jefferson Lee.

GARRITY. Where you from?

JEFF. Alabama.

GARRITY. That's in Mississippi, ain't it?

ALICE. Alabama's a *State.*

GARRITY. *(Pained expression — crosses to* ALICE)

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I'm tryin' to trap him. *(Gives her a look, then crosses back to* JEFF) How long you been here?

JEFF. Eight days.

GARRITY. *(To* MULLIGAN) That does it!

MULLIGAN. P-s-s-t! (GARRITY *crosses to* MULLIGAN, *who crosses down to* JEFF) I'll take him, Garrity. *(To* JEFF) Have you ever missed anything around here?

JEFF. Well — er — yes, suh. Two days ago I missed my radio. I think Mr. Langham, the gardener, took it.

MULLIGAN. Is he a colored man?

JEFF. No, suh — he's of the fair sex.

MULLIGAN. *(Making it very important)* Mr. Stevens, I'd like to see that gardener.

GARRITY. *(Nods approvingly to* MULLIGAN) That's good — *very* good!

STEVENS. *(At fireplace)* I don't think he's here tonight.

JEFF. No, suh. He went to the Bus Drivers' Ball.

MULLIGAN. *(To* JEFF) Have you noticed anything strange about this house?

JEFF. Well, there's some ghosts —

MULLIGAN. *(Hard)* Oh! — so you believe in ghosts?

JEFF. No, suh — oh, no, suh! But I always speaks kindly of 'em.

STEVENS. Jeff's all right, Mr. Mulligan. He's very faithful.

MULLIGAN. And I'm very careful. *(Up Right a bit.)*

GARRITY. *(A mouthful for him)* Sometimes them faithful ones is the worst kind, Mr. Stevens. You know — *(Clears his throat)* — it's our business to suspect *everybody.*

(Casts a meaning look at MARSDEN. MARSDEN *sees it and is uncomfortable. Crosses down Left Center.)*

MULLIGAN. *(Taking over)* All right! Now I want everybody to get what I'm gonna say. The Gorilla says he's comin' here at midnight to get Mr. Stevens. Me and Garrity are here to see that he don't. Somebody's

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gotta be in charge of this thing — and in this case it's *me.* That means from now on everybody in the house is gonna do what I say. I don't need no suggestions. All I want is quiet.

(DOORBELL rings off Right Center. JEFF *gives a grunt and quickly exits Right 1. Silent tension among all.* GARRITY *steps down beside* MULLIGAN, *waiting for orders.* MULLIGAN *takes out his revolver.* GARRITY *follows suit.* MULLIGAN *turns to* GARRITY.)

MULLIGAN. I'll open it. *(Indicates* STEVENS) Keep your eye on his nobs. Remember, he's the guy we're here to protect —

(Starts up; GARRITY *moves to Right of* STEVENS.)

ALICE. *(Moves close to* MARSDEN) Arthur —

MULLIGAN. *(Turns and faces all)* Sh-h-h! Quiet! Don't move!

(Tiptoes off Right Center, gun in hand. Pause. ALICE *moves up Left Center. Sound of DOOR opening.)*

SIMMONS. *(Off Right Center)* Hello, Mulligan!

MULLIGAN. *(Off Right Center)* Say, who invited *you* here?

SIMMONS. *(Off Right Center)* Is it an invitation affair? (ILKA SIMMONS *enters, followed by* MULLIGAN. *She is rather good-looking, brunette and breezy. Knows all the answers and most of the questions. She carries a Speed Graphic camera with synchronized flash attachment. Sees* GARRITY *and crosses to him breezily)* Garrity! Our destinies are linked together! How are you, darling?

GARRITY. *(Embarrassed)* Cut it out, will ya!

SIMMONS. *(Sees* STEVENS) Oh, I beg your pardon.

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I'm Ilka Simmons of the *Evening Democrat*. The office had the tipoff that there might be a little excitement out here tonight. They want the feminine angle — whatever that is.

STEVENS. I'm Mr. Stevens.

SIMMONS. How do you do, Mr. Stevens? *(Crosses to table Center and starts adjusting camera)* I'm sorry you're in all this trouble.

MULLIGAN. He ain't in no trouble!

STEVENS. This is my niece — Miss Denby.

SIMMONS. *(Looking at her)* You poor dear!

STEVENS. And Mr. Marsden —

SIMMONS. *(Nods)* Mr. Marsden. *(Adjusts camera; looks up; to* STEVENS) What's the matter with your hand?

STEVENS. It was bitten —

(MULLIGAN *signals to* STEVENS *not to answer—waving his hand and shaking his head.* ALL *see this except* SIMMONS.)

GARRITY. A dog bit him.

MARSDEN. Dog bites man.

SIMMONS. Oh — that's too bad. But the poor things get so little meat these days. *(Crosses Center to* STEVENS, *with camera)* Now — may I have a picture?

(Again MULLIGAN *gives* STEVENS *the negative signal.)*

STEVENS. *(To* SIMMONS) If you don't mind — I'd rather not.

SIMMONS. Just as you say. *(To* ALICE) I thought you might want something to remember him by. *(Crosses to* MARSDEN) May I inquire what your business is?

ALICE. *(Proudly)* Mr. Marsden is a playwright.

SIMMONS. Now nice! *(To* MARSDEN) You didn't by any chance write "State Of The Union," did you?

MARSDEN. *(Regretfully)* No — I didn't.

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GARRITY. Don't worry — he will!

MULLIGAN. *(To* GARRITY) *Ps-s-s-t!* (GARRITY *crosses to him)* Remember, you've got two things to watch — that window and Stevens. I'll tend to Mr. Gorilla. *(Pause while he looks at* GARRITY'S *blank face)* Get me?

GARRITY. What? Oh, yes, yes!

SIMMONS. *(To* STEVENS, *indicating* MULLIGAN *with thumb)* Great detective, that fellow. They call him the poor man's Nick Charles.

GARRITY. *(To* MULLIGAN) Comical dame.

(MULLIGAN *gives* GARRITY *a look, then crosses to door Right 1. Looks out.* SIMMONS *picks up camera — crosses up Center — puts it on secretary. Crosses and stands in window Left Center.)*

MARSDEN. *(Impatiently)* May I remind you that it's getting late. What are your plans here tonight, Mr. Mulligan?

MULLIGAN. My first plan is not to be questioned by playwrights. *(Crosses to Center)* When I've got that all worked out me and Garrity are gonna stick right here and wait for this bird to show up.

ALICE. *(Left Center — to* MULLIGAN) Don't you think it would be better to send my uncle to the City? Why should he stay here when he's been threatened by this horrible person?

MULLIGAN. *(Shakes head)* No good, Miss. You see — that'd spoil everything. We want a showdown with this Gorilla. Now don't you worry — just let him come. Mulligan and Garrity are on this job — remember that.

SIMMONS. They'll remember it all right.

GARRITY. *(Consults watch. Turns to* MULLIGAN *and taps his arm.* MULLIGAN *turns to him)* It's ten minutes to twelve.

MULLIGAN. Just gives us time to look around a bit.

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You stick here. *(To* STEVENS*)* Where does this door lead to? *(Crosses to door Right 1.)*

STEVENS. *(To Center)* To the dining room and kitchen. All outside doors and windows have been locked.

MULLIGAN. Good. *(Looks out door Right 1.)*

STEVENS. *(To* MARSDEN*)* Marsden, if you'll come uptsairs I'll give you a revolver. *(Turns to* ALICE*)* You come with us, Alice. *(Starts up Right Center.* MARSDEN *moves up back of table Center.* ALICE *crosses to front of table Center.)*

MULLIGAN. Wait a minute — I'm not so sure about that. You'd better stick right where you are.

(GARRITY *to door Right 1.)*

ALICE. *(Crosses to* MULLIGAN*)* I'm sure it'll be all right. Mr. Marsden will look out for Uncle Cy — *(Gives* MULLIGAN *a winsome smile)* — *Captain* Mulligan.

(MULLIGAN *takes off hat — smiles at* ALICE.)

GARRITY. Captain?

SIMMONS. Promoted, eh?

(MULLIGAN *puts on hat again — annoyed.)*

MULLIGAN. *(Weakened by her smile — consults watch)* All right. But I want everybody in this room in five minutes. *(Crosses to door Right 1.)* Get me — five minutes.

GARRITY. Five minutes!

(STEVENS *starts up the stairs, followed by* ALICE *and* MARSDEN.)

MULLIGAN. *(To* GARRITY*) Ps-s-s-t!* (GARRITY *crosses close to him)* I'll take a look through the lower part of the house first. *(Exits Right 1.)*

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(MARSDEN *puts his arm around* ALICE *and pulls her closer to him as they exit upstairs.* GARRITY *crosses up to doors Right Center. Business as he sees* ALICE *and* MARSDEN.)

SIMMONS. *(Who has watched* MARSDEN *and* ALICE, *turns and circles down to front table Center)* Fine! We're going to have love interest. *(Looks at* GARRITY, *who is standing up Right)* You're not yourself tonight, Garrity. What's the matter?

GARRITY. *(Crosses over to window Left Center)* Aw, married life's gettin' on my nerves.

SIMMONS. *(To Right of table)* How long have you been married?

GARRITY. *(At window).* The wedding takes place tomorrow. *(Down Left Center.)*

SIMMONS. I'll give you a little story. Where will the happy pair be at home?

GARRITY. Hundred and thirty-fifth street, right on the river.

SIMMONS. I'll drop in.

GARRITY. I hope so! *(Crosses up to door Right Center.)*

SIMMONS. *(Her eyes rest on decanter on table Center —speaks to decanter)* Ah, there, my pretty one! *(Crosses to table, picks up decanter.* GARRITY *inspecting doors Right Center closes them, then opens them)* Where have we met before? *(Removes stopper)* Take off your hat in the presence of a lady. (GARRITY *turns and takes his hat off — he sees business and says "aw nuts!"* SIMMONS *pours drink and looks to* GARRITY) Want to power up a little?

GARRITY. No — not while I'm workin'.

RADIO. *(Sepulchral voice)* Remember — on the stroke of twelve!

SIMMONS. *(Puts down glass)* What was that!

GARRITY. *(Worried)* Seems like it was that radio!

SIMMONS. *(Shrugs)* It must have slipped on a soap opera. *(Lifts her glass)* Well, here's to The Gorilla.

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This'll put hair on his chest. *(Knocks off the drink in one gulp)* The old boy has good liquor. *(Sits on edge of table)* Say, Garrity, I thought Van Cleave of Scotland Yard was working on this case.

GARRITY. He is.

SIMMONS. Making any headway?

GARRITY. No. This stuff is too fast for them Englishmen. English murders are cut and dried.

SIMMONS. I prefer American murders, too. They're so sincere.

GARRITY. You wouldn't believe this — but them Britishers still go in for *arsenic*. Anybody can solve an arsenic murder — six a day if you can get 'em.

SIMMONS. *(Morosely)* That's the hell of it — you can't get 'em. (GARRITY *is giving the room a thorough inspection)* Look, Garrity — do you think The Gorilla is coming here tonight?

GARRITY. Sure I do. It's gonna be great for me and Mulligan — good for you, too.

SIMMONS. Heaven knows I need a top-flight story! But what's the use of kidding ourselves? They sent you and Mulligan here for the same reason my paper sent me —the three of us are second-stringers. The Gorilla put out five threats tonight — and this is one of the phonies.

GARRITY. We got reason to think different.

SIMMONS. Okay, gorgeous — give yourselves a good time! You don't think they'd lay that reward in *your* laps, do you? Headquarters have planted Clancy and Fineman in a spot in Brooklyn. And I don't have to tell you — those two guys pick spots where the gravy train stops.

GARRITY. Don't be so sure. We know somethin' *you* don't know.

SIMMONS. *(Slides off table)* I'm so darn sick of being a reporter. Four years ago I could have gone into radio work. What a racket! Jack Benny sold 'em Jello on Sunday and Fred Allen followed up with a laxative on Wednesday.

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GARRITY. I heard them movin' pitcher scenario writers do pretty good. I arrested one once.

SIMMONS. What are those fellows like?

GARRITY. It's hard to figure out. I put him in a cell and he said, "My God! Here I am at Warner Brothers again!"

SIMMONS. Say, that Marsden's a handsome brute. I wonder why I don't like him?

JEFF. *(Enters Right 1 carrying a small tray with sandwiches, etc. Closes door after him)* Mr. Mulligan told me to bring this in to you-all.

SIMMONS. Ah, Mulligan's on an ice-box raid. *(Goes Left.)*

JEFF. Yes, ma'am — he says he's looking' in the ice-box for clues.

(Crosses above table Center with tray. Puts it on secretary up Center then goes to Left Center. Crash of GLASS off Right, followed by a SHOT. MULLIGAN *backs in from door Right 1 with pistol leveled. He is greatly excited.)*

SIMMONS. *(Faces front)* Well, here we go!

GARRITY. *(Draws automatic and advances toward door Right 1)* What's up?

MULLIGAN. *(Cries this)* Somebody at that kitchen window! Stuck his arm right through the glass!

(JEFF *has business of lips trembling.)*

GARRITY. Did you see him?

MULLIGAN. Just two eyes in the dark; eyes like balls of fire!

RADIO. I warn you — get out of here!

(JEFF *jumps and grabs* GARRITY'S *arm.)*

MULLIGAN. *(Crosses up Right — looks at radio)* Did that come from this radio?

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RADIO. Of course it did.

MULLIGAN. That's what I thought. *(Has a delayed take as he realizes radio is talking back to him.)*

SIMMONS. *(Starts Right 1)* Come on!

GARRITY. Where you goin?

SIMMONS. Let's see what's cooking in the kitchen!

MULLIGAN. Stay where you are!

(MARSDEN *suddenly dashes through hallway from rear and starts upstairs.* MULLIGAN *sees him and leaps after him with drawn gun.)*

MULLIGAN. Stop!

MARSDEN. *(Comes down stairway until he is in view)* Put up that gun, Mulligan.

(ALICE *and* STEVENS *enter hurriedly, excitedly, down the stairs.* JEFF *crosses up Center.* SIMMONS *crosses up Left Center.)*

MULLIGAN. *(Up Right Center)* Come in here, Marsden.

STEVENS. *(Excited, crosses to above chair Right of table Center)* Mr. Mulligan! What's happened?

ALICE. *(Excited, crosses to back of table Center)* What is it, Mr. Mulligan?

(Together)

MULLIGAN. I don't know, but I'm goona find out pretty quick.

JEFF. *(To* MULLIGAN) But not *too* quick.

MULLIGAN. Come here, Mardsen. (MARSDEN *crosses to* MULLIGAN) What were *you* doing in the rear of this house?

MARSDEN. I came down the back stairway. Mr. Stevens suggested that I familiarize myself with the house.

MULLIGAN. He did, eh? Where were you goin' in such a hurry?

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MARSDEN. To Miss Denby, of course. I heard a shot and —

MULLIGAN. Now let me tell you something — and this goes for everybody in the house — *(Looks toward* SIMMONS) You, too, Simmons. You're all going to sit down right here — and not move till I tell you to. Get me? Me and Garrity are here for two reasons. First, to protect Mr. Stevens; second, to capture The Gorilla. We know what we're doing, and we're gonna *run* this thing. *(Indicates window Left Center. Crosses to* GARRITY, *Right)* Garrity, is that window locked?

GARRITY. Sure; locked it myself.

MULLIGAN. Good! *(Crosses Center to front table — indicates chair up Left)* Simmons, you sit there. *(Indicates armchair Right of table Center)* Mr. Stevens — you take that chair — *(Indicates chair Left of table Center. Pulls it out)* Miss Denby, right here, please. *(Indicates chair at fireplace Left)* Marsden, over there by the fireplace. (ALL *sit in chairs indicated.* GARRITY *crosses to door Right 1.* JEFF *is sneaking off Right Center.* MULLIGAN *turns and sees him. Crosses up back table Center)* Hey — where do you think *you're* going?

JEFF. I don't know, suh.

MULLIGAN. *(Points to chair Right 2)* Sit over there. *(Following him)* Now I don't want any unnecessary excitement.

JEFF. Neither do I.

MULLIGAN. *(Quickly crosses up to doors Right Center, closes them. Crosses down to* GARRITY) Keep your eye on Stevens. If The Gorilla comes here tonight, we want to get him clean if we *can* — but shoot if you *must.*

SIMMONS. But spare your country's flag, she said,

MULLIGAN. *(Turns to her)* Quiet! *(Turns to* GARRITY) Where was I?

GARRITY. Shoot if you must.

MULLIGAN. Oh, yes. Now look —- this thing's going our way tonight — we've built up a solid man-trap.

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GARRITY. Impreg'able.

MULLIGAN. We can't afford no slips! *(Consults watch and looks at others. Then to* GARRITY) Ps-s-s-t! *(Motions* GARRITY *to go to* STEVENS. GARRITY *crosses to Right of* STEVENS *and stands there.* MULLIGAN *stands Right Center a moment. Looks up — thinks. Turns to* OTHERS) Sh-h-h! *(Raises both hands in a gesture for quiet)* Now — everybody — quiet! *(Crosses to Left Center. Turns to* OTHERS) Sh-h-h-h! (MULLIGAN *then crosses back to Right Center, turns front and waits. There is a moment of quietness — nobody stirs.* JEFF *suddenly starts to cough.* MULLIGAN *turns to him)* Stop that coughing — *(Turns front)* Where do you think you are — in a theayter? *(Pause.)*

SIMMONS. *(Raises her hand as if in school)* Teacher — may I have a cigarette?

MULLIGAN. *(Turns to* SIMMONS) Sh-h-h! *(Turns front again. Pause.)*

MARSDEN. *(Starts to rise — impatiently)* But why must we have this idiotic quiet?

MULLIGAN. *(Turns on* MARSDEN, *who sits back in his chair)* Say, will you people let me run this? I want quiet, and I'm gonna get it if I —

(CLOCK in hallway starts striking. ALL *sit rigid with expressions of mingled expectancy and fear. At the first stroke* MULLIGAN *draws his gun. Second stroke,* GARRITY *draws gun and* STEVENS, *very nervous, pulls chain of table lamp to get the glare out of his face. Fourth stroke —* SIMMONS *gets uneasy — wiggles in her seat. Fifth stroke —* MARSDEN *grips arm of his chair, starts to rise.* MULLIGAN *levels him gun at him and waves him down.* GARRITY *same business. Sixth stroke —* ALICE *utters a half-cry which she muffles with her handkerchief. Eighth stroke —* STEVENS *still wearing his dressing gown, gives way under the strain — throws his arm out — turns left oblique — leans*

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on table and buries his face in his arm. Tenth stroke — JEFF *whimpers —* MULLIGAN *turns on him — gun leveled at him. Holds position. Eleventh stroke — a hand creeps around edge of door Right Center, a scrawny finger finding the light switch. At the stroke of twelve finger presses light switch. The LIGHTS go out. There is a crash of glass. Ad lib. shuffling, etc.)*

MULLIGAN. Stick to that door, Garrity. (NOTE: *House exit lights off)* Damn it! — Where's the light switch?

(ALICE *screams. LIGHTS go on,* MULLIGAN *revealed with his finger on light switch up Right.* STEVENS, *completely unnerved, still has his face buried in the crook of his left arm, as we saw him before the lights went out.* ALICE *has fainted and is lying on the floor Right.* MARSDEN *is gone.* SIMMONS *is near fireplace — a little shaken.* GARRITY *at Left of chair Left of table Center, the same position he was in before the lights went out.* JEFF *up Right.* MULLIGAN, *up Right Center, looks at* STEVENS, *sees he is still there and is relieved.)*

MULLIGAN. Everything's okay! Mr. Stevens is safe. *(Turns to Right. Sees* ALICE *lying on the floor)* Miss Denby!

SIMMONS. *(Has crossed to* ALICE *and lifts her head from the floor)* She's fainted!

JEFF. *(Crosses down Right to door Right 1)* Miss Alice! *(Opens door Right 1.)*

(MULLIGAN *looks at* ALICE, *then to* GARRITY)

ALICE *(Weakly — as she opens her eyes)* Oh — where's my uncle?

SIMMONS. *(Soothingly)* He's okay — perfectly safe.

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MULLIGAN. Take her in there, Simmons. *(Points Right.)*

(GARRITY *crosses and helps* SIMMONS *lift* ALICE *to her feet.)*

SIMMONS. Come on now — easy does it. *(As she pilots* ALICE *to door Right 1)* That's fine! A little shot of brandy and you'll be better than new. *(At door — turns to* MULLIGAN) You fellows have cracked a page one story! It's the first time anybody ever stopped The Gorilla from going through.

MULLIGAN. And don't forget to say who done it.

(SIMMONS *and* ALICE *exit Right 1.* JEFF, *who has been greatly concerned over* ALICE, *follows them.* GARRITY *has fixed his eye on the chair in which* MARSDEN *was sitting. He is no longer there.* MULLIGAN *turns to* GARRITY, *beaming.)*

MULLIGAN. Well, looks like we cleaned up a mess of fish! (GARRITY *starts to speak but he interrupts him)* But we gotta be on our toes! The Gorilla was here — *and he's still in this house.* Garrity, if we watch our step we're the two biggest guys in New York tomorrow morning.

GARRITY. *(Eyes still on* MARSDEN'S *chair)* Do you miss anything?

MULLIGAN. *(Crosses above chair Right of table)* Say, do you think I'm blind? The minute them lights went on I saw *Mr. Playwright* was gone.

GARRITY. *(Crosses to* MULLIGAN *above table Center)* Do you think he's —

MULLIGAN. *(Finger to lips)* Sh-h-h! You stay here with his nobs. *(Looks at* STEVENS, *who nervously clenches his fist)* Poor devil. His nerves are all shot. *(Crosses to Right Center doors, turns)* A little drink might do him some good. I'm going through this house

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from top to bottom — *(Exits Right Center; closes doors after him.)*

GARRITY. *(Crosses down to back of table Center. Lifts cover of humidor and takes a cigar. He smells it and puts it in his mouth; then takes a handful and puts them in his pocket. Picks up decanter, glass and seltzer bottle and crosses down Left of table Center, and puts decanter, etc., on a small coffee table. He pulls out a chair and sits with his back toward* STEVENS *with a smug and satisfied air)* Well, I guess you'll feel pretty safe from now on with Mulligan and Garrity on the job, eh, Mr. Stevens? *(Lights cigar)* Too bad we didn't nail him though. *(Picks up decanter, holds it up and looks at it critically)* Oh, well — the night is still young. We'll get him. *(Carefully measures whiskey in glass)* Ten thousand dollars reward looks as good to Mulligan and Garrity as it does to anybody. It'll be a fine wedding present. (STEVENS' *right arm rises slowly. In his hand is a revolver, which is leveled at* GARRITY'S *back. And we see that he isn't* STEVENS! *He is a dark, intelligent looking man wearing a duplicate of* STEVENS' *dressing gown.* GARRITY *has started to reach for the seltzer bottle. The* STRANGER *lays his free hand on* GARRITY'S *shoulder.* GARRITY *smiles and, without turning, pats the hand reassuringly)* It's okay. I'm fixing you a little drink.

(The STRANGER *brings his gun forward a little — just over* GARRITY'S *shoulder. As* GARRITY *withdraws his hand it comes into contact with the barrel of the revolver. A look of speculation comes into his eyes. Cautiously, delicately, he slowly runs his fingers along the barrel of the revolver, his eyes gradually widening. Then his fingers touch the cylinder of the gun. Still facing front, his eyes become wider.)*

STRANGER. Get 'em up!

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GARRITY. *(Rises; starts to put hands up)* Why, what the — Who are you? *(Moves toward* STRANGER.)

STRANGER. Put 'em up!

GARRITY. *(Doing so)* Now, look — you're all mixed up.

STRANGER. I may be mixed up, but you're about to be scrambled.

GARRITY. *(Backing up)* Are you The Gorilla?

STRANGER. Thanks for the compliment, but I'm not. *(Takes* GARRITY'S *handcuffs from Right hand pocket)* Now put your hands behind your back.

GARRITY. I *will* not! *(Makes a sudden reach for his gun — knocks gun out of* STRANGER'S *hand.* STRANGER *grabs his other hand, brings them together behind his back and clicks on the handcuffs)* Hey — hey — don't do that — There's a newspaper reporter in this house. This is gonna be embarrassin'.

STRANGER. But not to me. *(Crosses — picks up his gun)* Now be seated, please.

GARRITY. I ain't tired.

STRANGER. Sit down! (GARRITY *sits down Left of table.)*

GARRITY. *(Shouts)* Mulligan! Mulligan! Where are you?

STRANGER. *(Takes large handkerchief from* GARRITY'S *breast pocket and ties it around his mouth. In a muffled voice* GARRITY *is calling for* MULLIGAN) It's a wonderful night eh, Garrity?

GARRITY. *(Muffled voice)* It is for *you.* But it ain't over yet.

STRANGER. *(Makes a clucking, deprecatory sound)* My dear fellow — you didn't have a chance. *(Starts tying* GARRITY'S *feet with cord of dressing gown.)*

GARRITY. You ain't been got — but you can be had.

STRANGER. *(Finishes tying* GARRITY *— rises)* There you are. *(Gives* GARRITY'S *head a rough shove)* Fooled The Gorilla, eh? Going to be the two biggest guys in New York tomorrow morning! *(Gives* GARRITY'S *head another shove.)*

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RADIO. Calling 2-X. Calling 2-X.

STRANGER. 2-X answering. I've got the dumb one. He's bound, gagged and handcuffed.

RADIO. *(Monotone)* Bump him off. That is all. *(Clicks off.)*

GARRITY. What's that?

STRANGER. An order from the Chief. But I don't want to bump you off *yet.* I want to toy around with you for a while. You're a lotta laughs. *(Crosses up Right Center)* And The Gorilla has a terrific sense of humor — he'll *love* you. *(Crosses up to button)* He may let you live for a long time — all of three hours. *(Laughs. Presses light switch. LIGHTS go out. Exits in dark closet Right 2.)*

GARRITY. *(Calls — muffled voice through handkerchief)* Mulligan! Mulligan! Where the hell is Mulligan! *(Pause.)*

(The rays of a flashlight enter from Right 1 door. The circle of light plays around room at Right but does not reveal GARRITY. *Finally the light shoots straight upstage and reveals the face of* MARSDEN *standing Left of doors Right Center. He stands for a moment with his face framed in the circle of light. Then light is extinguished.)*

MARSDEN. *(Takes searchlight from pocket and soon discovers* GARRITY. *Goes to Left of* GARRITY) Garrity! What's happened?

(Starts to untie him, when LIGHTS are suddenly turned on, revealing MULLIGAN *with finger on the switch Right Center. He has* MARSDEN *covered with his gun.)*

GARRITY *(To* MULLIGAN) Hey. Where the hell have you been?

MULLIGAN. *(Crosses down Right Center. Drama)*

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Well, Marsden, workin' out an idea for a play? Put up your hands.

MARSDEN. Don't be foolish, Mulligan — I didn't do this.

MULLIGAN. *(Front of table Center)* Well, *un*do it; hurry up. *(Ad lib. untying* GARRITY's *feet)* Speed it up —get those handcuffs off!

MARSDEN. *(To* GARRITY) Where's the key?

GARRITY. *(Rises)* In me pants.

MARSDEN. *(Finds key and releases* GARRITY) Now perhaps Mr. Garrity will explain how he got into this predicament.

MULLIGAN. Never mind Garrity and his predicament. What I want to know is, where is Stevens?

MARSDEN. You know as much about that as I do.

GARRITY. Listen, Mulligan — did you see Stevens in that chair?

MULLIGAN. Of course I did.

GARRITY. You *did* not!

MULLIGAN. No?

GARRITY. No! It was another guy!

MULLIGAN. No!

GARRITY. Yes! *(To* MARSDEN) It wasn't Stevens at all.

MARSDEN. Yes?

GARRITY. Not yes — *no!*

MULLIGAN. And you let him tie you up!

GARRITY. *(Gulps)* There were *three* guys. They came from nowhere!

MULLIGAN. *(Crosses to Right Center)* There you *are!* Now the whole game's shot to pieces! *(Turning to* GARRITY) Garrity, if we don't get Stevens back by tomorrow morning we'll be the two biggest *simps* in New York! *(Crosses to* MARSDEN — GARRITY *up to Right, back of table)* Now, maybe you'll tell us where *you* was during the big blackout?

MARSDEN. *(Left Center. Pause)* Well, when the lights went out, I ran to Mr. Stevens. At the same time

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someone grabbed him, struck me in the face, knocked me down and carried him out. I got up and followed him. He carried Mr. Stevens to the garage. I ran there as fast as I could, but when I got there both had disappeared.

MULLIGAN. How did they leave the house?

(GARRITY *crosses down Right Center.)*

MARSDEN. *(Hesitates briefly)* Why — *(Points to window Left Center)* Through that window.

MULLIGAN. And you followed them through that window?

MARSDEN. Yes.

MULLIGAN. *(Crosses up, looks at window. Crosses down Left Center. Exchanges glances with* GARRITY. MARSDEN *furtively crosses to table Center — back to audience — watching* MULLIGAN) How did you get back into this room?

MARSDEN. Why — *(Points Left Center)* Through that window.

MULLIGAN. Oh, you did? Well, a little while ago Garrity pasted a strip of paper across that window — *(Points to strip of paper which seals the window)* And it's still there, unbroke — (MARSDEN *starts to cross Right.* GARRITY *steps down, blocking the way) Unbroke!*

MARSDEN. *(Confused)* Well — er — perhaps it was that *door. (Points to Right 1 door)* You see, I was quite excited myself —

(GARRITY *laughs sarcastically.)*

MULLIGAN. Wait a minute, Garrity. *(Suddenly changes his attitude toward* MARSDEN *to one of apologetic concession. To* GARRITY) That's possible. A fellow will make mistakes when he's excited — especially in the dark. *(To* MARSDEN) I didn't mean any offense, Marsden — you know *that.*

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MARSDEN. *(Crosses to Center of table)* Of course. No apology necessary, Mulligan.

*(*GARRITY *is puzzled by all this sudden politeness)*

MULLIGAN. I just wanted to put myself right with you, that's all. *(Crosses to Left of* MARSDEN*)* Us guys get kind of rough in this business — we have to be. I didn't mean to hurt your feelin's, and what you just told me about Stevens is good stuff to work on. *(Slaps his shoulder)* You're all right, Marsden.

*(*GARRITY *also gives him a hearty slap on the shoulder — without knowing why.)*

MARSDEN. *(Crosses toward door Right 1.)* Did Miss Denby go in there?

MULLIGAN. Yes. The poor kid fainted.

MARSDEN. Fainted? Why didn't you tell me? *(Rushes off Right 1.)*

GARRITY. *(Crosses to* MULLIGAN *Left Center)* Why so polite to that guy?

MULLIGAN. *(Low tone)* Nix! Play dumb, Garrity! Play dumb! That guy's got something we want.

GARRITY. The dame?

MULLIGAN. *(Irritated)* No! — no! *(Crosses to Right)* I'm gonna find out how he left this room and *why*. Let him alone for a while — give him a chance to stick his neck out. Be *plenty* polite to him. *(Crosses up to doors Right Center and opens them)* You plant yourself upstairs — I'm gonna look at the outside of that kitchen window — for fingerprints. *(Exits off Right Center down hallway.)*

GARRITY. *(Crosses up to door Right Center)* Hurry back, will you?

(Starts off as ALICE *and* MARSDEN *enter Right 1.)*

MARSDEN. *(Entering with arm over* ALICE'S *shoulder)* Garrity!

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GARRITY. *(Turns quickly — frightened)* What? *(Then with grace and charm)* Oh, it's you, old fellow! Nice seein' you again. *(Crossing down and indicating* ALICE) How's the pigeon?

ALICE. I'm all right, thank you.

MARSDEN. Where's Mulligan?

GARRITY. *(A bad try at being British)* He went out for a bit of a breather. A brisk walk to the bottom of the garden —

ALICE. *(Looks to table Center)* Mr. Garrity — where's my uncle?

GARRITY. You unc——? Oh, *him! (To* MARSDEN) You tell her, old boy. *(Gives him a pat on the shoulder)* You do it so much better. *(He goes quickly through doors Right Center.* MARSDEN *takes* ALICE *to Right table Center.* GARRITY *exits up the stairs.)*

MARSDEN. Now — sit down, dear. (ALICE *sits Right of table)* Shall I get you a little brandy?

ALICE. Arthur — where's Uncle Cy?

MARSDEN. *(Hesitates)* Well — now you musn't be frightened——

ALICE. *(Realizes something is wrong) Where is he?*

MARSDEN. *(Pause)* Darling — your uncle has disappeared.

ALICE. *Disappeared?* How?

MARSDEN. We don't know — exactly.

ALICE. *(Rises)* Oh, this is horrible! *(Turns)* Then why isn't something being done? Why aren't *you* doing something?

MARSDEN. Now please, dear — you're going to be brave about it, aren't you? The detectives are doing everything possible.

(JEFF *enters Right 1.)*

ALICE. *(Stifles a sob)* I didn't believe it could happen — I didn't *believe* it.

JEFF. *(Crosses to her)* Miss Alice — ain't you feelin' any better?

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ALICE. I'll be all right, Jeff.

MARSDEN. *(To* ALICE) You'd better go upstairs. Anything can happen down here.

JEFF. And it *did!*

MARSDEN. *(To* JEFF) You go upstairs — *ahead* of Miss Denby.

JEFF. Yes, suh. *(Crosses up Right Center.)*

MARSDEN. *(To* ALICE) I'm going to stay here and do a little investigating of my own.

(They start up Right Center.)

ALICE. Please be careful!

MARSDEN. Don't worry about *me.*

JEFF. *(On first landing of stairs — turns to* MARSDEN) Do you want me to *stay* upstairs?

MARSDEN. That's a good idea.

JEFF. *(Relieved)* It sho' is!

(ALICE *and* JEFF *exit upstairs.* MARSDEN *watches* ALICE *off — then enters room — closes the Right Center doors — crosses down to door Right 1, opens it, looks out and closes it. Crosses up to Center and looks about cautiously. He then goes quickly to the secretary up Center, picks up phone and calls number.)*

MARSDEN. Rhinelander 0216. *(Puts receiver down on desk and looks through papers in pigeon holes and drawers. He picks out one, puts it in his pocket, picks up receiver and says — quietly)* "J.N." — *(Pause)* Take.

(Takes tiny device from pocket — holds it to transmitter and gives short signal — sounding faintly like a wireless signal. Doors Right Center open quietly — then close quietly. MARSDEN *then hangs up receiver, looks front, crosses to Left and starts a minute investigation of wall near chest.)*

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SIMMONS. *(Enters Right 1)* Got a clue, Mr. Marsden? *(Crosses to Left Center.)*

MARSDEN. *(Turns quickly — a bit confused)* Just trying to find one. I can't make heads or tails of the thing.

SIMMONS. It's got *me* licked. *(Turns — looks at table Center)* Where's Stevens?

MARSDEN. He's gone.

SIMMONS. Gone? Where?

MARSDEN. *(Testily)* How do *I* know?

SIMMONS. *(Incredulously)* You mean The Goril——?

MARSDEN. *(Quickly)* That's exactly what I mean!

SIMMONS. How do you *like* that! I've got to call the office — *(Crosses up to phone but* MARSDEN *stands in her way.)*

MARSDEN. You can't do that!

SIMMONS. *(Looks at him — puzzled)* Why?

MARSDEN. Because I won't let you!

SIMMONS. Now just a minute! Who do you think you —

MULLIGAN. *(Enters Right Center — crosses briskly to front of table Center)* Now we're gonna start at the beginning of this thing.

SIMMONS. Mulligan, I want to call the office —

MULLIGAN. Nothin' doin'! No phone calls go out of this house until the case is closed.

SIMMONS. I don't expect to *live* that long.

MARSDEN. *(To* SIMMONS) Please don't be witty. It irritates me.

SIMMONS. Who the hell cares what irritates *you?*

MULLIGAN. Shut up! *(Gives them both a look, then paces up and down in front of table Center thoughtfully)* Now, we're gonna start at the beginning of this thing. I want everybody in this room. *Everybody!* Garrity's bringing Miss Denby and the colored feller. I don't want anybody to leave this room under *any* circumstances.

(SIMMONS *moves up Left.)*

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MARSDEN. *(Crosses to Left of table Center)* Mulligan, do you think The Gorilla is still in this house?

MULLIGAN. You know as much about that as I do — maybe more.

*(*GARRITY *and* ALICE *enter down stairs —* GARRITY *to down Right.* ALICE *sees* MULLIGAN *and rushes to him.)*

ALICE. Mr. Mulligan, is there any trace of my uncle?

MULLIGAN. *(Looks toward* MARSDEN *— then to* ALICE) There might be. *(To* GARRITY) Where's that butler?

GARRITY. He's comin'. I told him to lock all the windows.

MULLIGAN. All right. Now I'd like to have a few straight answers from certain — *(Looks at* MARSDEN) — members of this little watch party —

*(*JEFF *rushes downstairs and through doors Right Center. He is so scared he can't talk, making only a few incoherent sounds to* MULLIGAN. ALICE *moves to above table Center.)*

JEFF. *(Like the tobacco auctioneer)* Er-bub-bub—rub-bub-bub-bub-bub —

SIMMONS. Sold American!

MULLIGAN. *(To* JEFF) What's the matter? Come on! Come on! Speak up.

JEFF. *(After more wild gestures and incoherent sounds finally speaks)* Er — er — gorilla — gorilla — I — I — I — seen a gorilla!

ALICE. Where?

JEFF. Right on them stairs. He was standin' like this — *(Imitates)* And he looked at me like this — *(Imitates.)*

SIMMONS. That was probably Garrity.

*(*GARRITY *reacts.* SIMMONS *retreats to fireplace Left.)*

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MULLIGAN. *(To* JEFF) You say you saw a gorilla on those *stairs?*

JEFF. Yes, suh!

(MULLIGAN *cautiously crosses up Right Center, stops at doors. Standing behind Left door, he looks cautiously around it and up the stairs.* JEFF *follows him gingerly and stands up Right.* MULLIGAN *turns to* OTHERS.)

MULLIGAN. Well, he ain't there now. *(Turns to* GARRITY. *Indicates door Right 1)* Garrity — stick to that door.

(Crosses down Right Center. GARRITY *at door Right 1.* JEFF *crosses up Right Center. Looks out doors — crosses and stands up Center.* MULLIGAN *crosses front of table — pause — looks Right then Left. Crosses to fireplace Left. As he passes* MARSDEN, *who is in his path, gives him a push out of the way. Same to* SIMMONS. *He stoops and looks into fireplace — up the flue — then turns front, looks upward and thinks deeply. Looks into fireplace again. Straightens and starts pacing off footage of room, measuring the distance mentally as he goes Right. As he does this he passes* MARSDEN, *whose eyes are following him curiously.)*

MARSDEN. *(Quiet voice)* What's the idea?

(MULLIGAN'S *two hands grab the brim of his straw hat as he clenches his teeth, uttering a groan.* MARSDEN *has disturbed his train of thought; he has forgotten how much he has counted. His mind still centered on his problem, he crosses back to the fireplace, enroute to which he has the same business of pushing* MARSDEN *and* SIMMONS *out of the way. Looks into fireplace again, turns front and ponders. He makes up his mind — starts pacing in measured*

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steps again. Crossing toward Right he gets to Center and stops. Listens — turns and looks to Left. MARSDEN *looks Left.* SIMMONS *looks Left.* MULLIGAN *then resumes his measured pace to Right until he gets to Right Center. He wheels sharply upstage for a step or two, then turns abruptly and goes to closet door. He pulls the door open. A* SAILOR, *first class seaman U.S.N., apparently dead, falls stiffly — face forward — toward the floor.* GARRITY *catches him just before he hits the floor.* ALICE *to Left Center.)*

MULLIGAN. Ah — *hah!*

GARRITY. A sailor!

MULLIGAN. Is he dead?

GARRITY. *(Lifts his head)* I don't think so. He seems to be breathing.

MULLIGAN. Put him in that chair.

(ALL *ad lib. as they pick up* SAILOR *and put him in chair Right of table Center.)*

GARRITY. *(Indicating* SAILOR'S *sleeve)* Look! Four stripes!

MARSDEN. That means four major engagements.

GARRITY. The guy's a one-man World War!

MULLIGAN. *(To* JEFF — *indicating closet door)* Close that door.

(JEFF, *watching, crosses and closes closet door.)*

MARSDEN. *(Left of table)* Open up his shirt! Give him air!

(Ad lib. They open his shirt. ALICE, *standing front of table Left of* SAILOR, *stifles a little scream. Gasps of surprise from* OTHERS.)

ALICE. Mr. Mulligan — look! *(Back to Left of table.*

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MULLIGAN *looks. The* SAILOR'S *opened jacket discloses a gorilla's hand print on his chest.)*

MARSDEN. *(Crossing to Right)* The Gorilla's hand-print!

*(*JEFF *comes down to door Right 1.)*

MULLIGAN. *(Right Center to* GARRITY*)* Take him upstairs — *(To* SIMMONS*)* You can go with him, Simmons.

MARSDEN. I'll go.

MULLIGAN. No, you won't. You'll stay right here. (GARRITY *picks* SAILOR *up. Crosses to Right Center with him. Turns up to Right Center)* If he comes to — question him. Leave that camera here, Simmons.

SIMMONS. *(Disgusted)* Oh, all right! *(Puts camera on secretary up Center)* Have you ever heard about the freedom of the press? It's in the Constitution!

MULLIGAN. Well, I'm changin' it. *(To* GARRITY*)* Hurry, Garrity! Why don't you hurry!

GARRITY. *(Turns)* I can't. I think this sailor's water-logged!

(He and SIMMONS *exit up the stairs.* ALICE *backs to Left Center.)*

MARSDEN. *(Aggressively; to* MULLIGAN*)* Who do you suppose that sailor *is?*

MULLIGAN. *(Crosses to Right Center)* That's another thing you probably know more about than I do.

MARSDEN. *(A quick, resentful look)* What do you mean by that?

MULLIGAN. Keep you shirt on. I'll get around to you later.

MARSDEN. *(Bristling)* You'll get around to me right now. I've stood for your insinuations long enough.

MULLIGAN. Oh, you have, have you? Insinuations ain't the only thing you're gonna stand for from me, buddy.

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ALICE. *(Left Center)* Please don't quarrel. We haven't time for that — we've got to find my uncle!

MULLIGAN. You can say that again! I think I could lay my hands on him in less than five minutes. *(Looks at* MARSDEN.)

ALICE. *(Steps forward)* You mean — you know where he is?

MULLIGAN. *(To* MARSDEN) *You* tell her, Marsden *(Turns Right, counters with* MARSDEN.)

MARSDEN. *(Crosses to* ALICE *Left Center)* Mr. Mulligan probably has some information we don't know about.

MULLIGAN. I'll say I have. (GARRITY *and* SIMMONS *enter Right Center doors.* MULLIGAN *turns to them)* Get anything out of him?

GARRITY. *(Right)* He came to for a second and murmured something about a gorilla.

SIMMONS. *(Right Center)* Yes, and he said something about someone named Poe.

MULLIGAN. Poe? Poe? Who can that be?

ALICE. I only know of one; and that's Edgar Allen Poe.

MULLIGAN. *(Pause)* Get him on the phone.

ALICE. He's been dead nearly a hundred years. *(Turns to* GARRITY) *You* know!

GARRITY. Oh — *that* Poe! Oh, yes!

(JEFF *moves up Right Center.)*

MULLIGAN. Now, let's get down to cases. A little while ago I tried to get into that chest over there. It's locked. *(To* ALICE) Have you got a key, Miss Denby?

ALICE. Why, no. And we've wanted to use it. My uncle was going to have a key made.

MULLIGAN. *(Produces bunch of keys, selects one and hands bunch to* ALICE) Suppose you try this one.

(WARN Curtain.)

(ALICE *takes keys and starts to chest Left. Again the hand at doors Right Center appears and the same scrawny finger finds the light switch.)*

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MARSDEN. Alice! Don't open that chest.

MULLIGAN. You keep out of this, Marsden.

(LIGHTS go out. JEFF *moves up Right Center to doors. Lights in door Right 1 go on.* ALL *ad lib. surprise at this.)*

SIMMONS. What's that?

GARRITY. *(At door Right 1 — to* MULLIGAN) I don't get it! The lights get turned on in that room and *everybody's* in here! MULLIGAN *crosses quickly to door Right 1.)* Where are you going?

MULLIGAN. I'm going in that room. If I need you, I'll signal with the whistle — get me? Turn on those lights — (GARRITY *turns on the light switch up Right. LIGHTS up)* And have that chest opened. Stick around here and don't let anybody move. *(Exits Right 1.)*

GARRITY. All right, but watch your step. *(LIGHTS off Right 1 go out.* GARRITY *turns to* ALICE — *crosses to Center front of table)* Miss Denby, open that chest and be quick about it.

(ALICE *starts up Left towards chest.)*

MARSDEN. *(Back of chair Left of table Center)* Alice, I tell you not to open that chest!

GARRITY. *(Over end of table Center draws gun; holds it on* MARSDEN) One move from you and it's curtains—

(MARSDEN *backs away Left Center, eyeing* GARRITY'S *gun and at the same time watching* ALICE.)

GARRITY. *(To* ALICE) Miss Denby, open that chest or I'll turn this guy off as sure as you're a foot high!

ALICE. *(Feels that* GARRITY *means it)* I'll open it! I'll open it! *(Fumbles with key — opens chest and looks down in it. There is an expression of horror on her face. Then the dead silence is pierced by her blood curdling scream.)*

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(The LIGHTS go out black — dim down spot on chest — then a COMPLETE BLACKOUT.)

(Flash up HOUSE LIGHTS. This will reveal that the curtain is down.)

END OF ACT ONE

(NOTE: *In the complete darkness the curtain should descend QUIETLY and time should be allowed for it to settle, so that when the house lights are turned on we may have the complete effectiveness of this "surprise curtain."*)

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ACT TWO

SCENE: *The same.*

TIME: *Ten minutes later.*

AT RISE: JEFF *stands Left, looking down into the open cedar chest, an expression of deep compassion on his face. After a few beats* ALICE'S *voice is heard from within the chest.*

ALICE'S VOICE. *(Rather low, with a melancholy quality)* Oh, I must get out of here. It's so close and dark and suffocating.

SIMMONS' VOICE. *(From within chest, but louder)* The same goes for me, Sister! *(On* SIMMONS' *line* ALICE'S *head comes into view, and it immediately becomes apparent that they are mounting a stairway)* I never want to see that gruesome place again as long as I live.

(SIMMONS *is following immediately behind* ALICE. *They step over the side of the cedar chest.)*

JEFF. What's down there, Miss Alice?

ALICE. The darkest, dankest, most dismal dungeon — *(To* SIMMONS) It's something DeQuincey might have dreamed up.

SIMMONS. *(Shakes her head)* No. They don't *grow* that much opium. (SIMMONS *and* ALICE *cross down Center)* Are you sure the thing you saw wasn't — er — imagination?

ALICE. Now please, Miss Simmons — *I* know what I *saw!* When I opened the lid of that cedar chest, there it was — standing at the foot of those stairs and looking

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up at me — a gorilla. *(Shudder)* A hideous creature! When I screamed it leaped to one side and disappeared in the darkness.

JEFF. *(With a small note of triumph)* I *told* 'em I saw a gorilla! *(Gestures toward stairway Right Center)* They wouldn't believe me.

ALICE. Mr. Garrity wouldn't believe me, either. *(To* SIMMONS) And it wasn't exactly gallant of him forcing us to follow him down those stairs — at the point of a pistol.

SIMMONS. Garrity's been a shoulder tapper so long he doesn't know what the word gallantry means.

JEFF. Where's Mr. Mulligan?

ALICE. Miss Simmons found him — lying on the floor of the cellar.

SIMMONS. I stumbled over him in the dark. *(Shudders)* Ugh! What a creepy feeling!

JEFF. You mean — he's dead?

SIMMONS. No. somebody slipped him a speedball.

JEFF. A what?

ALICE. He was doped, Jeff. Somebody doped him and carried him to the cellar.

SIMMONS. How they got him there *I'll* never know. That cellar is four solid walls. The only entrance to it is through that thing — *(Points to cedar chest.)*

MARSDEN. *(Off — below)* All right, Mulligan — now pull yourself together. That's it! On your feet.

(ALICE *and* STEVENS *turn.)*

GARRITY. *(Off — below)* His pins are a little weak. *(Scuffling sound of* MARSDEN *and* GARRITY *guiding* MULLIGAN *up the steps)* Come on now — snap out of it, Mulligan.

ALICE. He's still unconscious.

SIMMONS. If he stays that way long enough he might solve this case.

(MARSDEN'S *head appears in chest as he pilots* MUL-

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LIGAN *up the steps. Then* MULLIGAN'S *head comes in view.* GARRITY *is behind* MULLIGAN, *holding him up and shoving him along.* MULLIGAN'S *hair is disheveled and his eyes have the blank stare of a zombie.* ALICE *goes to table Center and fills a small glass with brandy.)*

MULLIGAN. *(Groggy)* Open that chest, Miss Denby! From now on I'm runnin' this joint — get me? Open it!

GARRITY. Boy! Has *he* been juiced-up!

(MARSDEN *puts his hand on* MULLIGAN'S *forehead, as if testing his temperature.* GARRITY *slaps his hand. They glare at each other.)*

MULLIGAN. *(Glassy-eyed)* Play dumb, Garrity! Play dumb! That guy Marsden knows somethin'!

GARRITY. *(Shakes him)* Come on now, Mulligan! Come out of it!

MULLIGAN. I ain't so sure about the dame, either. (MARSDEN *lifts one of* MULLIGAN'S *feet over the side of the chest.* GARRITY *does the same with other foot)* It's easier when they've got a moll. "Cherchez lay femmie," I always say.

(ALICE *crosses to* GARRITY *with glass of brandy.)*

ALICE. Mr. Garrity, do you think a drink of brandy would help?

GARRITY. It might. *(Takes brandy, gulps it down and hands glass back to* ALICE*)* Thanks.

(JEFF *crosses down Center.)*

MULLIGAN. *(Starts to struggle)* Where's that gorilla? He had me — *(Sees* JEFF*)* Ah, there you are! Tried to strangle me, didn't you? *(His hands are set for* JEFF'S *throat)* Tried to bite me, didn't you?

JEFF. *(Backing away)* No suh! I didn't try to bite

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nobody! (Goes Left — hides behind SIMMONS, *Left.)*

ALICE. Please, Mr. Mulligan —

MULLIGAN. *(To* JEFF) All right, Mr. Gorilla — I'm gonna put you away — and it won't be in a zoo either!

(Starts for JEFF *again.* JEFF *is terrified.)*

GARRITY. *(Grabs* MULLIGAN) Mulligan! That ain't no gorilla — that's Jeff. Remember — the butler.

MULLIGAN. *(Turns to* GARRITY — *unsteadily)* Who the hell are *you? (Makes a swing at* GARRITY, *who ducks to Right, causing* MULLIGAN *to swing entirely around.* MARSDEN *and* SIMMONS *grab* MULLIGAN, SIMMONS *hanging to one of his arms as he swings it.* JEFF *moves up Left Center)* Come on! If you guys want to tangle let's mix it!

SIMMONS. *(Pleadingly)* Please, Mulligan — come out of the fog, will you?

GARRITY. *(Takes his arm — speaks soothingly)* Yeah, Mulligan. Look — this is Garrity — your old pal — *(Gives a little blow on the whistle)* — See? Whistle. *(Puts it to* MULLIGAN'S *lips)* Blow!

MULLIGAN. *(Pause. Begins to come to his senses and looks about)* Say — what is this? What happened?

GARRITY. It's all right, Mulligan. (SIMMONS *crosses to right)* They slipped you knockout drops.

MULLIGAN. *(Rubs forehead, trying to remember)* Knockout drops?

GARRITY. Sure. You went into the dining room, remember? You said if you needed me you'd whistle.

MULLIGAN. Whistle? I couldn't even whisper. *(Looks about — bewildered)* I don't get it.

GARRITY. Now concentrate, Mulligan. Remember that chest?

MULLIGAN. Chest? *(Looks at* ALICE'S *bosom.)*

GARRITY. Yes — *(Points)* — that cedar chest. It's a stairway to the cellar.

MULLIGAN. Stairway? *(Turns, staggers over to chest*

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and looks down. Then turns to GARRITY. *Groggily)* So what?

GARRITY. *(Crosses to* MULLIGAN) Say, listen — come here, big boy. *(Takes* MULLIGAN *down)* Take a deep breath and count to ten. (MULLIGAN *closes his eyes and does so. Opens his eyes)* Now tell me — how did you get in that cellar?

MULLIGAN. *(Normal again)* Cellar? What cellar?

GARRITY. I'll break it down for you: A, I told Miss Denby to open that cedar chest, like you said; B, she did it and it turned out to be a stairway; D, —

MULLIGAN. C. You skipped C.

GARRITY. Oh. All right — *(Resumes)* C, we went down there and found you on the floor, unconscious. Now how did you get there?

MULLIGAN. How do *I* know? I went into the dining room when the lights went on. (JEFF *crosses slowly at back toward stairs)* A hairy-armed somethin' grabbed me from behind. The next thing I remember — the next thing I remember — is what's happenin' now. *(Rubs his forehead, straining to gather his full senses.)*

MARSDEN. *(Crosses to* MULLIGAN *and* GARRITY) How do you feel, Mulligan?

MULLIGAN. What do *you* care? (MARSDEN *turns Left.* JEFF *starts to exit Right Center.* MULLIGAN *hears him and calls him back)* Come here! *(Turns to* OTHERS) Now we're gonna start at the beginning of this thing! Garrity, tell me exactly what's happening here.

GARRITY. Well, when Miss Denby opened that chest, she screamed and said she saw a gorilla standing at the bottom of the steps —

SIMMONS. And when we went down there — we found *you.*

ALICE. *(To* MULLIGAN) I *did* see a gorilla — a most horrible looking thing.

MARSDEN. *(To* ALICE) I've got it! That gorilla you saw carried *Mulligan* down to the cellar.

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MULLIGAN. Is that so? You keep quiet! *(Turns to* JEFF *up Center.* JEFF *scared of* MULLIGAN) Come here, you —

JEFF. *(Coming down timorously)* I didn't try to bite you.

MULLIGAN. Who said you did?

GARRITY. You did. You thought he was a gorilla.

MULLIGAN. I *did? (Faces front — slaps himself on forehead in desperation)* My God! *(Wheels suddenly to* JEFF *and bellows)* A while ago you said you saw a gorilla on them stairs. Was that on the square?

JEFF. No, suh — on the staircase.

MULLIGAN. Was he — er — hairy?

JEFF. I don't know what his name was.

SIMMONS. Abbott and Costello.

(The lid of the chest opens quickly and an unseen hand sails MULLIGAN'S *faded straw hat down Center. The lid closes quickly.* ALL *look down at* MULLIGAN'S *hat for a moment. He picks it up, puzzled. Then* ALL *suddenly rush to cedar chest, lift lid and look down.)*

GARRITY. Nothing there.

MULLIGAN *(As they move down Center)* Garrity, that Gorilla guy is still in this house!

MARSDEN. That's a moot question.

MULLIGAN. *(To* MARSDEN) And who mooted it? *You* did! *(Turns to* GARRITY — *then to* ALICE) Miss Denby, come here, please. (ALICE *crosses to him)* How long have you known this — er — scenario — er — this Marsden?

ALICE. About a week.

MULLIGAN. That's a pretty short time.

ALICE. *(With coolness)* Is it?

MULLIGAN. He admits he never sold a play. Do you know how he makes his living?

MARSDEN. What are you driving at?

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MULLIGAN. You heard the question. Do you want to answer it?

MARSDEN. I see no reason why I should.

MULLIGAN. *(Pause — looks at* GARRITY) I thought so. (GARRITY *makes a circle with his thumb and forefinger)* Miss Denby, you say you saw a gorilla on those stairs. *(Points)* What did he look like?

ALICE. Why — a gorilla.

MARSDEN. *(Fed up)* What the hell did you expect him to look like!

MULLIGAN. *(Gives* MARSDEN *a look)* I'll get around to you — and when I do — !

GARRITY. *(Kissing the tips of his fingers)* Oh, boy!

MULLIGAN. *(To* GARRITY) Ps-s-s-t! (GARRITY *crosses to him.* MULLIGAN *sotto voce)* Any queries?

GARRITY. *(Sotto voce)* What about that sailor?

MULLIGAN. *(Sotto voce — nods approvingly)* A moot question. (GARRITY, *pleased, crosses back Right Center.* MULLIGAN *turns to* ALICE) Miss Denby, about that sailor we found — Do you know him?

ALICE. No.

MULLIGAN. Do you know *any* sailors?

ALICE. Why, yes.

(MULLIGAN *looks at* GARRITY. GARRITY *nods knowingly.)*

MULLIGAN. *(To* ALICE) Well, somebody put that sailor in that closet. *(To* SIMMONS) You don't carry a sailor around with you, do you?

SIMMONS. No, I don't — *(Faces front — her face brightens)* But God, what an idea!

ALICE. *(Exasperated)* Mr. Mulligan — are you going to try to find my uncle or not?

MULLIGAN. *(Looks at her)* You've given me an angle! *(Looks front and thinks)* Marsden, you say a gorilla carried me into that cellar?

MARSDEN. Yes.

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MULLIGAN. *(To* GARRITY) If he's carried me down those steps you'd have seen him, wouldn't you?

GARRITY. Sure.

MULLIGAN. Then there's another entrance to that cellar! *(Snapping into action)* And I'm gonna find it! Miss Denby, Simmons — *(Turns to* JEFF) — and you — all of you are gonna go upstairs with *me. (To* GARRITY) Marsden is gonna stay down here with you.

ALICE. But can't I stay down here with Mr. Marsden?

MULLIGAN. Can't I give an order around here without somebody askin' a question? You're goin' upstairs and Marsden's gonna stay here — and you're both gonna like it!

GARRITY. You said it.

MULLIGAN. *(Turns to* GARRITY — *whispers — nods; shouts to* OTHERS) Now get out! (ALICE, SIMMONS *and* JEFF *go to stairway Right Center.* GARRITY *crosses to* MULLIGAN, *glancing toward* MARSDEN, *who has walked up Left.* MULLIGAN *in a low voice)* Keep your eye on that guy Marsden.

GARRITY. He won't get out of my sight.

MULLIGAN. *(Starts up, turns to* GARRITY) If anything breaks — I'll be where I can hear your signal.

(MULLIGAN *starts for stairs.* JEFF *sees him coming and hurriedly exits up stairs.* MULLIGAN *and* ALICE *exit.* MARSDEN *to Left.* GARRITY *to Right.* BOTH *looking around.* MARSDEN *taps on wall Left for traps.)*

MARSDEN. *(Comes Center to* GARRITY) Garrity!

GARRITY. *(Jumps — startled)* What — what — what is it? Come on — what — what!

MARSDEN. Who do you suppose that sailor is?

GARRITY. *(Right Center)* Oh, that sailor? You mean *him!* Well, now I'll tell you — *(Quickly)* What do *you* think?

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MARSDEN. *(Frowns thoughtfully)* I don't know. I wish he'd talk. I think he could tell us something.

(There is a BANG upstairs. GARRITY *jumps, looks up, tries to laugh it off.)*

GARRITY. Ha, ha! Noisy up there, ain't it?

MARSDEN. You're nervous, aren't you? *(Produces cigarette case)* Have a cigarette?

GARRITY. No, thanks. *(Remembers cigars in humidor)* I'll have one of these.

(He bites end off cigar and MARSDEN *extends lighter to him.)*

MARSDEN. *(During above)* Has it occurred to you that the sailor might have been carrying a secret order of some kind? His rating indicates he's been in the Navy for some time.

GARRITY. And he *could* be a phony.

MARSDEN. Not with that sea-tanned face. Garrity, suppose I go up and try to get something out of him —?

GARRITY. Not a chance — you heard what Mulligan said.

MARSDEN. *(Suddenly)* Garrity!

GARRITY. *(Turns quickly — scared)* Hey! Don't do that!

MARSDEN. *(Crosses to* GARRITY *Left Center, looks about and speaks in a sepulchral voice)* Did you ever hear that The Gorilla buries his victims alive?

GARRITY. No. *(Gulps)* Does he?

(MARSDEN *lays hand on* GARRITY'S *arm.* GARRITY *takes it off.)*

MARSDEN. *(Thoughtfully)* It must be a terrible thing to be buried alive!

GARRITY. *(Moves Left)* It's no joke to be buried dead, either.

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ALICE. *(Above)* Arthur! Arthur! Quick! (MARSDEN *makes a dash for stairway.)*

GARRITY. Here! Wait! *(With gun drawn, stands in his way)* You're gonna stay where you are, Marsden — alive or dead!

MARSDEN. *(Stops)* Don't be a fool, Garrity! Miss Denby —

GARRITY. Mulligan will take care of her! Now back up!

MARSDEN. *(Backs up Right — followed by* GARRITY *— and stops)* All right, Garrity — you have it your way and I'll get to her *my* way!

(Takes a step back and pretends to throw something on the floor. With this gesture there is a blinding FLASH from a small flower bowl in front of him. LIGHTS go out. Count four for MARSDEN'S *business. LIGHTS on, and he has vanished.* GARRITY *stands staring in blank amazement at spot where* MARSDEN *disappeared. Then he crosses quickly to doors Right Center, stands near Left frame of door, looks up stairway and blows whistle.)*

GARRITY. Mulligan! Mulligan!

(A GORILLA'S ARM, *in hallway, comes out from behind Left frame of door, reaches down and takes* GARRITY'S *hat off, lifts it upward, then drops it. Focus flashlight (white) from Left on gorilla's hand for business.* GARRITY, *scared, reaches up and feels the air above his head — wondering what took his hat off. Business — drops revolver.)*

GARRITY. Where the hell is Mulligan? *(Blows whistle. Picks up hat, then revolver. Starts down Right.)*

SIMMONS. *(Enters down the stairs during* GARRITY'S *excitement. She goes to secretary up Center for her camera)* Garrity!

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(GARRITY *jumps.* SIMMONS *crosses down Center.)*

GARRITY. *(Sees* SIMMONS *and is relieved)* Oh, Simmons — Simmons — come here, come here. *(Goes to* SIMMONS — *puts arm about her imploringly. Leads her over Left Center)* Simmons, you're in the living room, ain't you?

SIMMONS. Of course I am.

GARRITY. Tell me — am *I* with you?

SIMMONS. Why, certainly. *(Turns away.)*

GARRITY. *(To Center. Much relieved, mops brow)* That's fine. *(Comes back to her — takes her arm)* Hey, Simmons, come here — *(Turns Right and looks)* Is Marsden with us?

SIMMONS. Oh, for heaven's sake — no! I just left him upstairs.

GARRITY. *(Looks around)* Upstairs? Marsden — *(Gulps) — upstairs?*

SIMMONS. Yes — with Miss Denby. She saw that gorilla dart through the hallway and yelled for help. *(Eyes* GARRITY *narrowly)* Say, are you crazy?

GARRITY. I think so! *(Faces Left — holding head)* I'm sure of it! You might as well send for the guy with the white coat!

(The folding screen — against wall up Right falls to the floor with a bang. GARRITY *and* SIMMONS *jump.)*

SIMMONS. If I get out of here without screaming-meemies —!

GARRITY. *(As he crosses to screen)* Now don't get excited, Simmons. Easy does it, as the saying goes.

(GARRITY *picks up the screen. It unfolds. He tries to fold it but can't. With the screen wide open he moves up toward Right Center wall, then starts across to Left wall. This screen business has permitted the* STRANGER *to enter unobserved through*

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panel in Right Center wall. He stands looking toward GARRITY *with drawn gun, then moves slowly down.)*

SIMMONS. *(Crosses toward Right)* You know, Garrity — you guys are in a hell of a spot if you don't rescue old man Stevens — *(She sees* STRANGER, *casually turns front and continues to talk)* — you know that, don't you? *(Then she has a violent "delayed take" and looks back at* STRANGER. *She screams) Garrity!*

GARRITY. *(Jumps — drops screen)* Don't *do* that! *(He sees* STRANGER. *His jaw drops.)*

STRANGER. Hello, Garrity.

SIMMONS. *(Backing away)* Oh —!

STRANGER. *(To* SIMMONS) Do you know who I am?

SIMMONS. No, but I'm tired of you already.

(GARRITY'S *hand has been creeping toward his gun.)*

STRANGER. *(Turning)* Get 'em up, Garrity.

GARRITY. Say, listen — you can't do this to me!

STRANGER. Can't I —?

(SIMMONS *grabs his arm. He throws her off — but before he can level his gun again* GARRITY *is on top of him.* STRANGER *drops his gun. They wrestle up Right Center toward wall, where they fall,* GARRITY *on top.)*

GARRITY. Mulligan! Where the hell is Mulligan? *(They roll toward wall)* Beat him with a shovel! Beat him with a shovel!

SIMMONS. *(Excitedly — at fireplace)* I can't *find* a shovel! *(She picks up the screen, runs up Right and tries to hit* STRANGER *with it. It opens and falls on top of* GARRITY *and* STRANGER, SIMMONS *falling with it.)*

GARRITY. *(Under screen)* I've got him! I've got him!

(SIMMONS *rises and picks up the screen.* GARRITY *is*

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apparently wrestling with STRANGER *and shouting, "I've got him!" When he gets to his knees he is holding the coat and pants of the* STRANGER — *who has disappeared. He looks at the garments blankly, then at the wall up Right.* NOTE: *Under cover of screen* STRANGER *exits through panel in wall Right.)*

GARRITY. Where the hell is Mulligan? *(Blows his whistle weakly. Then he turns to* SIMMONS, *who has backed down Left Center)* Simmons! Simmons — come here! (SIMMONS *comes to him)* Look, Simmons — I had him! He was in these — and he just *evaporated!*

SIMMONS. Listen, Garrity, my paper authorized me to offer The Gorilla $5,000 for his life story. You don't think that was *him,* do you?

GARRITY. I don't know! Don't make me think, Simmons. Don't make me think!

SIMMONS. As if I could.

GARRITY. What d'ya mean, as if you could? I got a lot on my mind — After I get out of this I gotta get *married.*

SIMMONS. *(Goes Right Center)* A fine groom *you'll* make!

(GARRITY, *mopping his brow, has crossed up Right to the big hamper. A gorilla's head bobs up out of the vase within a few feet of* GARRITY. *At first he is transfixed; then he blows a loud blast on his whistle and* THE GORILLA *withdraws his head quickly into the vase.)*

SIMMONS. *(Turning)* What's the matter? (GARRITY *tears his hair and throws his hat on the floor)* Garrity!

GARRITY. Where's Mulligan? Where the hell is Mulligan! *(Looks toward vase. Crosses down Right)* Nobody can take what I gotta take! It can't be took!

SIMMONS. Calm down! Everything's all right *now!*

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GARRITY. Everything's all *right? (Points to vase)* Simmons, there's a gorilla in that thing!

SIMMONS. Let's get *out* of here! *(Starts toward stairs.)*

GARRITY. *(Crosses — grabs* SIMMONS *by the dress and pulls her down Left Center)* Hey, Simmons — wait a minute — come here! *(Arm about* SIMMONS) Er — er — Simmons, old pal — *(Hat falls on floor. He holds* SIMMONS *by dress — reaches down and gets hat)* My hat! My hat! Simmons — you ain't gettin' cold feet, are you?

SIMMONS. If I am you're no hot water bottle.

GARRITY. Listen, girlie — we gotta stick together!

SIMMONS. And be torn apart.

MULLIGAN. *(Enters down stairs — comes down Center)* What's goin' on, Garrity?

GARRITY. *(Crosses to Left — desperately)* Now look, Mulligan — you've got to stick with me. Things are happening too fast down here for one guy — *too fast!*

MULLIGAN. Say — this is no time to blow up.

SIMMONS. It's as good a time as any.

MULLIGAN. *(Looks around —* SIMMONS *crosses to Right)* Where's Marsden?

GARRITY. Ah, now you've got a mute question! Listen, Mulligan! Now listen — I've got a gun on this guy Marsden, see? When all of a sudden he disappears! Disappears in a flash of smoke! Blooey! Like that!

MULLIGAN. Aw — you're crazy!

GARRITY. Sure I am! But it didn't come easy! I had to *earn* it!

MULLIGAN. Now listen, Garrity — you gotta keep your head.

SIMMONS. I'd like to keep mine, too. So I'm going. *(Starts toward stairs.)*

MULLIGAN. You stay right here! (SIMMONS *stops.* MULLIGAN *turns to* GARRITY) What's the matter with you, anyway?

GARRITY. *(With forced calmness)* Mulligan — a few

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minutes ago I wrestled with a guy I *know* is The Gorilla. Wrestled with him right there — *(Points Right Center)* — and he disappeared right outa my hands.

MULLIGAN. Now I *know* you're crazy! *(Crosses Right.)*

SIMMONS. It's a fact, Mulligan.

MULLIGAN. You're both crazy!

GARRITY. *(Going Right to* MULLIGAN. *Speaks quietly, sincerely)* Mulligan, I hate to tell you this. I don't want to heap no burdens on your shoulders — but there's a gorilla in that jar.

(MULLIGAN *glances at vase, then fixes* GARRITY *with a suspicious eye. Holds this for a moment, then goes slowly up to vase, stops, draws gun and looks inside. Looks back at* GARRITY.)

MULLIGAN. There ain't no gorilla in there. *(Puts gun in pocket and turns vase up, so bottom can be seen. It is empty.)*

GARRITY. Well, what d'ya know!

SIMMONS. *(Gives* GARRITY *an accusing look; then to* MULLIGAN) You'd better do something about him.

MULLIGAN. *(Crosses down to* GARRITY, *gravely concerned about him. Quietly)* Garrity, you've got to get a grip on yourself. I'm dependin' on you and you gotta help me. I can't be in two places at once.

GARRITY. But *Marsden* can! No sooner does he disappear over there — *(Points to Right Center — then points to* SIMMONS) — than this sob-sister comes down and says she just saw him with the dame upstairs.

MULLIGAN. *(To* SIMMONS) Marsden upstairs? With Miss Denby?

SIMMONS. *(Right)* Yes. Where were *you?*

MULLIGAN I was in a room tryin' to get somethin' outta that sailor.

SIMMONS. What's with him, Mulligan? How do you fit him in?

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MULLIGAN. *(Thoughtfully)* Looks like he's part of The Gorilla's gang.

GARRITY. How do you figure that?

MULLIGAN. You remember that gorilla's handprint on his chest?

GARRITY. Yeah.

MULLIGAN. Well, it's tattooed there.

SIMMONS. Tattooed? Why I thought The Gorilla put his trade-mark on that sailor *tonight.*

MULLIGAN. So did I.

SIMMONS. Then how did he get that bump on his head?

MULLIGAN. *(Facing Right;* SIMMONS *and* GARRITY *Right of him)* Now you've *got* me there! Two or three times he came to and murmured, "Get The Gorilla, get The Gorilla!" Oh, I'd like to lay my hands on that Gorilla guy!

(Closet door Right 2 swings open revealing a skeleton, which faces MULLIGAN *and brings its thumb up to its nose.* MULLIGAN *quickly fires at it.)*

SKELETON. Ha! Missed me!

(The door slams shut before SIMMONS *and* GARRITY *can see what has happened. They ad lib. exclamations.* MULLIGAN *rushes Right and tugs at closet door. Can't open it.)*

GARRITY. What did you see?

MULLIGAN. A skeleton. *(Rattles door knob)* I can't open it. *(Reaches in pocket.)*

SIMMONS. Why don't you try a skeleton key?

MULLIGAN. *(Gives her a look, inserts key and opens closet door. The closet is empty)* Nothin' there.

GARRITY. What's the use, Mulligan? Nobody can find *anything* in this place.

MULLIGAN. *(A defeated man; looks out Right*

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oblique) Well, I've followed every clue and I've shot at everything I've seen. Now I'm open for suggestions.

GARRITY. I've got one: let's get out of here. *(Turns up Center.)*

SIMMONS. I have a suggestion, Mulligan.

GARRITY. *(Turns to her)* Let's have it.

SIMMONS. You need some help. Why not send for the buttons? Surround the place with cops.

MULLIGAN. *(Firmly)* No.

SIMMONS. *(Snaps fingers)* Here's a great idea — send for Van Cleave!

MULLIGAN. *(Crosses to* SIMMONS) Nothin' doin!

SIMMONS. Now let's be sensible, Mulligan. The situation here certainly justifies his help.

MULLIGAN. Me and Garrity started this thing, and me and Garrity are gonna finish it!

GARRITY. *(Pause — weakly)* You said it. *(To Left.)*

SIMMONS. *(Crosses to* MULLIGAN) Now look, Mulligan — you've got to admit that your work here tonight doesn't call for a round of applause.

MULLIGAN. So what?

SIMMONS. So this: A man has been abducted before our very eyes. We don't know what's happened to him. He may be tortured, murdered! I'm talking for the *New York Evening Democrat* now, Mulligan — and it'll back me up. The *Democrat* is going to see that this Mr. Stevens gets the protection he's entitled to.

MULLIGAN. Yeah? So what are they gonna do?

SIMMONS. I'm going to 'phone for Van Cleave! *(Starts for phone.)*

MULLIGAN. *(Draws gun)* Stop right where you are, Simmons! (SIMMONS *stops — turns back down Right Center)* This may put me in the dog-house with the *Democrat,* but I'm gonna run this thing if it costs me my job. I think I know as much about this game as *any* dick; if I don't I'll take the consequences.

SIMMONS. You mean *Stevens* will take the consequences. *(Brushes gun away)* Put that thing away! I'm

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telling you now, Mulligan — if you and Garrity don't whip it up in the next half hour you're in for the hottest panning two columns can hold!

MULLIGAN. Don't make me laugh! If the *Democrat* ever used two columns of your stuff you'd think you was Louella Parsons.

GARRITY. *(Taps* MULLIGAN *on sleeve* — MULLIGAN *turns)* Maybe she is!

(The lid of the chest Left flies open and JEFF, *in a wild state of panic, scrambles out and staggers back into* MULLIGAN'S *arms Center.* GARRITY *goes Left and looks at chest inanely.* JEFF *looks blankly about and* MULLIGAN *shakes him.)*

MULLIGAN. How did you get down there?

JEFF. *(Gulps; tries to get his breath)* Well, I — Well, you see —

MULLIGAN. *(Shakes him roughly)* How did you get in that cellar!

JEFF. Wait! *(Gasps for breath.* GARRITY *crosses Center)* Just a minute. I'll tell you.

MULLIGAN. *(Releasing him)* Well, make it snappy and tell it straight.

GARRITY. *(To* JEFF) Did you hear him? Talk.

JEFF. Well — I was scared and I made up my mind I was gonna get out of this place. So I ran to the garage to get Mr. Steven's Ford car. Well, suh, all of a sudden somethin' opens up and I slide, fast — down, down, down — and land in a dark place. I can't see *nothin'*. I get up and run into something that seems like a stairway. So I start climbing, and here I am.

MULLIGAN. That does it! There's a secret entrance to that cellar and it's in the garage.

GARRITY. Could be.

MULLIGAN. *Could* be? *Is! (To* SIMMONS) All right, Sister — you're demanding action; now you're gonna get it! You're willin' to cooperate with us, ain't you?

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SIMMONS. Of course I am.

MULLIGAN. Good! Then I want you to stay right here — you and this butler. (SIMMONS *looks distressed.* JEFF *swallows hard.* MULLIGAN *turns to* GARRITY) I'll go to the garage and you go upstairs. Watch that Denby dame and keep your eye and your gun on Marsden.

GARRITY. *(Turns to him)* Who, me?

MULLIGAN. Yes, you! *(Takes gun out, crosses down Right Center to* SIMMONS) Here — you'd better take this. *(Hands gun to her)* And see that this butler guy stays down here.

SIMMONS. Please take my advice, Mulligan. Never mind the garage — work right here — in this room! This whole thing's very obvious to me. Stevens thought The Gorilla wanted this house. What he didn't know was that The Gorilla already *had* the house! Believe me, Mulligan, you and Garrity have got the chance of your lives. You've stumbled right into The Gorilla's headquarters — this house is hot! (MULLIGAN *looks at* GARRITY. GARRITY *shrugs)* What if there *is* a secret entrance through the garage? What difference does that make if *this* is the place it leads to?

MULLIGAN. You've got the wrong slant, Simmons. We've *got* to cover that garage. *(Crosses to Right Center)* Get goin', Garrity. *(Goes to doors Right Center,* GARRITY *accompanying him. In hallway* MULLIGAN *pauses to further admonish* GARRITY) Don't let that guy Marsden out of your sight. (GARRITY *nods.* MULLIGAN *starts toward front door; turns)* If I need you I'll signal with the whistle.

(GARRITY *makes a circle with thumb and forefinger and starts upstairs. Sound of front DOOR opening and closing as* MULLIGAN *exits.)*

GARRITY. *(On stairs — to* SIMMONS) You ain't afraid to stay down here, are you?

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SIMMONS. Yes.

GARRITY. Well, if you need me blow a whistle.

SIMMONS. If I need you I'll blow, period. (GARRITY *exits upstairs. After a pause)* Jeff, what's your idea of this thing?

JEFF. I ain't got none. But if I had a hundred ideas I'd use every one of 'em to get away from here. *(Crosses up Right Center.)*

SIMMONS. No you wouldn't. I'd use fifty of 'em myself. *(To table Center)* I think The Gorilla is the head of a snatch mob.

JEFF. A what?

SIMMONS *(With a wave)* Never mind. *(Pause — while she studies* JEFF) Jeff, how long have you known Miss Denby?

JEFF. All her life. *(Crosses to table Center)* I was born on the Denby plantation. Then Colonel Denby decided to move to Mobile and Miss Alice went away to college —

SIMMONS. *(Interrupting)* Look, Jeff — Mr. Marsden never came out here before tonight, did he? (JEFF *hesitates — swallows hard)* Did he?

JEFF. *(Looks up the stairs — hesitates)* Miss Simmons — I been afraid to say this —

SIMMONS. *(Quickly — earnestly)* You needn't be, Jeff. I can protect you. I represent a big newspaper — you understand?

JEFF. Yes, ma'am. *(He hesitates; then)* Miss Simmons — I saw Mr. Marsden the first day I came out here, about a week ago.

SIMMONS. *(With quick interest)* Where was he?

JEFF. He was in this room. Miss Alice sent her baggage ahead — from Bryn Mawr. So I brought it out and there was nobody here — so I let myself in through the back door, came into this room, then took the baggage upstairs. As I started to come down the stairs again I saw Mr. Marsden come out of this room.

SIMMONS. Are you sure about that?

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JEFF. Yes, ma'am. When he came in with Miss Alice tonight I recognized him right away.

SIMMONS. Was Mr. Stevens out here — when you saw Mr. Marsden?

JEFF. No, ma'am. He hadn't come yet. He was gonna stay in town and meet Miss Alice when she come in from Philadelphia. I had a telegram from Miss Alice tellin' me what train to meet. I lost the telegram, so I got all mixed up.

SIMMONS. How did you lose it?

JEFF. I left it here in the livin' room — and I couldn't find it any more.

SIMMONS. How did Marsden first meet Miss Denby?

JEFF. On the train from Philadelphia. Trains is awful crowded these days — and there was a mistake and Mr. Marsden was sittin' in Miss Alice's parlor car seat. Both of 'em had a ticket for the same chair.

SIMMONS. *(Thoughtfully)* I see.

JEFF. I heard her tellin' Mr. Stevens how nice he was about givin' up his seat — and all that.

SIMMONS. *(Produces telegram)* Is this the telegram you got?

JEFF. *(Looks at it — surprised)* Why yes, ma'am. Where'd you find it?

SIMMONS. In Marsden's so-called manuscript. *(Takes script from desk and speaks in low voice)* This manuscript is a phony!

JEFF. It *is?*

SIMMONS. Yes. *(Indicates cover)* It has a new cover, neatly typed with Marsden's name on it — *(Riffles pages, which are heavy with red and blue pencilings)* — but the inside is a stage manager's script of "Arsenic and Old Lace." *(Walks away thoughtfully. Turns, comes back to* JEFF *and speaks in low voice)* Jeff, we're nearer to finding Mr. Stevens than you think.

JEFF. Yes, ma'am — I hope so. Mr. Stevens is such a nice, kind man — it'd just break Miss Alice's heart —

SIMMONS. *(Interrupting)* By the way — you never saw that sailor before, did you?

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JEFF. No, ma'am — I never saw him before tonight.

SIMMONS. Well, whenever you get a chance — stick close to him. His mind's doing a little rambling, but listen to every word he says — and try to remember all of it.

JEFF. Yes, ma'am — I will. *(Scratches his head thoughtfully)* But with the house all locked — I don't know how Mr. Marsden got in the livin' room that day.

SIMMONS. You heard him tell Miss Denby not to open that cedar chest, didn't you?

JEFF. Yes, ma'am.

SIMMONS. *(With a significant shrug)* Okay! Only one guess to a customer.

(MARSDEN *comes down stairs slowly and quietly.* SIMMONS *sees him, signals* JEFF *and they move up Left.* MARSDEN *enters living room quietly, looking about to see if it is unoccupied. Stops; listens. Crosses toward Right. Turns, sees* SIMMONS *and* JEFF.)

MARSDEN. *(Pleasantly)* Oh — I didn't know you were down here.

SIMMONS. I'll *bet* you didn't. Where's Miss Denby?

MARSDEN. She's upstairs with Garrity. He won't let her out of his sight.

SIMMONS. I notice you don't have much trouble getting out of *anybody's* sight.

GARRITY. *(Above)* Hey, Simmons!

(MARSDEN *puts finger to lips as signal to* SIMMONS *not to tell* GARRITY *he is there.)*

SIMMONS. *(Crosses to doors Right Center)* Yeah?

GARRITY. *(Above)* Send that butler up here, will ya?

SIMMONS. Okay. *(Signals to* JEFF *to go ahead.* JEFF *crosses to steps. To* JEFF) Remember what I told you.

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JEFF. Yes, ma'am.

MARSDEN. What did you tell him?

SIMMONS. Wouldn't you like to know?

(JEFF *exits up stairs.)*

MARSDEN. *(Comes down Center)* Mulligan's been suspicious of me all night. It's terribly annoying.

SIMMONS. I should think it would be.

MARSDEN. *(Frowning)* I wish he'd accomplish something!

SIMMONS. Stop throwing curves, Marsden! *(Pointedly)* Where's Stevens?

MARSDEN. *(Startled)* Why do you ask *me?*

SIMMONS. Because I think you know.

MARSDEN. *(Crosses to her)* What do you mean?

SIMMONS. You're not putting anything over on *me.* I know who you are

MARSDEN. *(Outraged)* Do you mean to —

SIMMONS. *(Interrupting him)* Now wait a minute. You needn't worry — I believe in odd numbers and my favorite is *number one! (Points to self; then aggressively)* I'm hep to you, understand? *(Pause; softer voice)* But under certain circumstances Mulligan and Garrity would never learn from me that you're —

MARSDEN. *(Quickly catches her arm)* Quiet! *(Releases arm; she rubs it. He goes to Left.)*

SIMMONS. All right — but my paper wants a Sunday story under your signature. (MARSDEN *turns; their eyes meet)* Do I get it?

MARSDEN. *(Pause)* Yes — it's yours.

SIMMONS. Now we're getting places.

MARSDEN. And furthermore the amount they pay for it is yours.

SIMMONS. That's the kind of talk I understand. *(Crosses up Center — gets camera from secretary desk. Comes down Left Center and aims it at* MARSDEN) Now — let's have a picture of you.

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MARSDEN. *(Excited)* No! No! Don't do that, Simmons!

SIMMONS. Why not?

MARSDEN. I'll show you — *(Points to vase on radio Right)* Take a picture of that vase.

SIMMONS. *(Puzzled)* I don't get it.

MARSDEN. Go ahead — take the picture.

SIMMONS. A little screwy — but I'm getting used to *that. (She points her camera and presses bulb. There is a report and a flash from camera lens. The glass breaks to bits.* SIMMONS *is alarmed as she turns to* MARSDEN) How did *that* happen?

MARSDEN. *(Smiles. To Center)* I switched cameras on you — while you were in the cellar.

SIMMONS. That's a hell of a thing to do. *(Crosses up Center and puts camera on secretary. Comes down to table Center. Angrily)* I might have killed someone!

MARSDEN. *(Inscrutable smile)* I figured you would try to steal a shot of Stevens.

JEFF. *(Partly runs and partly falls down stairway; enters)* Miss Simmons! Miss Simmons!

SIMMONS. *(At table Center, turns)* What's the matter?

JEFF. That gorilla! I saw it again — upstairs, in the hallway!

(MARSDEN *throws a quick glance at* SIMMONS *and dashes up the stairway. Three SHOTS in rapid succession above.* SIMMONS *fumbles her gun and has ad lib. business with* JEFF.)

MULLIGAN. *(Off — outdoors)* Did you get him, Garrity?

GARRITY. *(Voice above)* No — he's too quick!

(Sound of front DOOR opening and MULLIGAN, *without pausing to even glance into the living room, dashes up the stairs with drawn revolver.* JEFF *and* SIMMONS *look after him, then turn.)*

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JEFF. *(Scared)* Miss Simmons, we've *got* to get out of here!

SIMMONS. Hold out a little longer, Jeff. I know something. *(Crosses to him; low voice)* Did you get anywhere near that sailor?

JEFF. *(Low voice)* That's when it happened! I started sneaking toward his room and met that gorilla in the hallway. He was —

(SIMMONS *sees* MULLIGAN *coming down stairway and signals* JEFF *to silence. They back toward Left as* MULLIGAN *enters. At first he pays no attention to* SIMMONS *or* JEFF, *but looks all around the room with quick, jerky glances* — JEFF *and* SIMMONS *watching him. Finally he turns to* SIMMONS.)

MULLIGAN. Simmons, have you seen that sailor?

SIMMONS. Why, no. *(Uneasy)* Anything wrong?

MULLIGAN. He's disappeared! Gone! Vanished! Simmons, there's some awful things goin' on in this house! *(Walking up and down; looking about)* There's things happening here tonight that never happened *anywhere* before! *(Pacing Right and Left — wild-eyed and desperate)* It ain't over yet! No, sir — it ain't over yet! *(Reaches Center — stops. To* SIMMONS) We're sent here to protect old man Stevens. We set him in a chair — and he disappears. Then I puts that scenario-writer down here and tells Garrity not to take his eyes off him — so what happens? What *happens? (Softer, for emphasis)* He disappears, Simmons — right before Garrity's eyes — *(Loud) — in a cloud of smoke! (Softer)* And then Garrity wrestles with a guy he figures is The Gorilla — *(Points up Right)* — right over there. *(Almost a whisper)* So what happens? He disappears. *(Loud) Out of his pants! (More calmly)* And now what gives? We find a sailor — first class seaman, U.S.N. — unconscious. *Unconscious,* get me! and *he* ups and disappears! *(Paces Right to Left.* JEFF *crosses up to steps.* MULLIGAN *stops Center; to* SIM-

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MONS) Ye gods — if anybody else in this house disappears I'll go crazy! Crazy, get me? K-r-a-s-i-e, crazy!

(MARSDEN, *followed by* GARRITY, *rushes down the stairs.)*

MARSDEN. *(On stairs — greatly excited)* Mulligan! Mulligan! Miss Denby has disappeared!

MULLIGAN. *(Too far gone for any reaction, faces front; speaks softly)* Well, I'm a son-of-a-bitch!

GARRITY. *(At his Left)* Don't blow up, Mulligan! Don't blow up!

MARSDEN. *(At* MULLIGAN'S *Right)* No, for God's sake, no! Help me, Mulligan. She's gone, I tell you— GONE!

MULLIGAN. *(Crossing Right)* Go 'way! I can't think! I can't think!

MARSDEN. *(Angry and determined)* All right, if you won't help me, Garrity will. So will Simmons — Simmons — you go upstairs — stay in the hall. Garrity — you stay here and keep your eyes open! I'll go to the garage. Come on! *(Starts toward doors Right Center.)*

MULLIGAN. *(Wheels around)* Wait a minute! Wait a minute! Where do you get that stuff!

MARSDEN. *(Back to* MULLIGAN) I can't go any further, Mulligan — not with Miss Denby in danger. I'll tell you everything.

SIMMONS. But, Marsden —

MARSDEN. I've got to, Simmons! *(To* MULLIGAN) I'm not a playwright. I'm not Marsden. *I'm Van Cleave!*

(MULLIGAN'S *jaw drops.* GARRITY *gulps.)*

GARRITY. Of Scotland Yard?

MARSDEN. Yes. *(Quickly flashes credentials.)*

MULLIGAN. *(Faces front; stunned)* Well, drat my granny's old gray cat!

GARRITY. And there goes the reward!

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MARSDEN. No! If there's any reward it goes to you boys.

MULLIGAN. Now you're talking.

MARSDEN. And I'll add a thousand for the man who brings Miss Denby back. Come on!

(ALL *go hurriedly toward Right Center doors and stairway.)*

MULLIGAN. *(Testily)* Hurry up, Simmons! Hurry up!

SIMMONS. *(At stairs)* Quiet, mugg! From now on you're just a character bit.

(SIMMONS *and* JEFF *exit upstairs.)*

MARSDEN. Mulligan, you come with me.

MULLIGAN. Sure, Chief. *(To* GARRITY) Stay right here!

GARRITY. But, Mulligan — ? *(WARN Curtain.)*

(MULLIGAN *hurriedly follows* MARSDEN *to front door. Sound of DOOR opening and closing.)*

GARRITY. *(Calls)* Hey, Mulligan! Mulligan! *(Blows whistle feebly.)*

(GARRITY *fans himself with his hat and backs up Left to a point between fireplace and cedar chest. A large BATTLE AXE is raised above his head (from behind fireplace projection). It measures the distance, then the blade is raised upward. As is starts downward to his head* GARRITY *steps forward. The axe is withdrawn behind the upper end of the fireplace.* GARRITY *pauses at table Center, then cautiously crosses to closet Right 2. He opens the door and sees it's empty. Leaves door open and goes cautiously up Right to the big Grecian vase and looks down in it. Its apparent emptiness gives*

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him a new sense of security. He laughs derisively, but a bit nervously, and comes down to front of closet and stands with his back to it. A low, fiendish laugh from RADIO *causes* GARRITY *to react so violently that his hat drops off. As he stoops to pick it up a long SWORD comes out of the closet, measures the distance like a billiard cue, then shoots out and hits* GARRITY *on the backside. He jumps.)*

GARRITY. Hey! Mulligan, Mulligan! Where the hell is Mulligan! *(Backs up to table Center. Takes out flashlight, covers closet with it, as if it were a pistol, pointing wrong end. Sees his mistake, takes out pistol. Tries to be brave — laughs fatuously)* Ha! Ha! Ha! *(Backs down Left to fireplace)* Tryin' to get my goat, eh? *(Laughs nervously)* Well, for cripes sake!

RADIO. Sucker!

(GARRITY, *panicky, jumps backward on the hearth of fireplace. This movement causes him to again drop his hat — as he puts whistle in his mouth. Bends down to pick up hat, at the same time starting a blow on the whistle. On cue with start of whistle he is yanked swiftly, silently through the fireplace (straight back through its dark interior), the sound of his whistle giving the sound effect that usually accompanies a person being whisked out of a scene. The stage is empty for a brief moment, then* THE GORILLA *(animal) enters through door Right 1. He is carrying* ALICE. *Her beautiful long hair cascades downward. Her clothes are shredded, revealing parts of her shapely body. STAGE LIGHTS dim down and out. AMBER SPOT comes up. In SPOT* THE GORILLA *walks Center with* ALICE *in his arms. Paws her and growls.)*

ALICE. *(Comes out of faint, sees* GORILLA *and is terrified)* Oh — let me go! Let me go!

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(There is a groan from Left wall. The GORILLA *stops a moment, listens.)*

(The lid of the chest starts to open slowly. THE GORILLA *goes toward it. As he gets out of SPOT, LIGHTS go out. BLACKOUT.)*

(Flash up HOUSE LIGHTS. THE CURTAIN IS DOWN.)

END OF ACT TWO

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ACT THREE

SCENE: *The same.*

TIME: *Fifteen minutes later.*

AT RISE: *Stainless glass window up Right Center stair landing is open. The stage is dark and empty. The lid of the chest starts to open very slowly, about one inch, this action being revealed by a thin blade of faint blue light coming from within the chest. This arrests the eyes of the audience, being the only bit of light on the stage.*

Gradually the lid is opened wider until it is tilted all the way back.

An UNIDENTIFIED MAN *comes up the steps. He is carrying a* FIGURE, *bound up in white canvas. All this is but faintly revealed in the light that comes from the cedar chest, which is very little.*

The UNIDENTIFIED MAN *emerges from the chest, bearing his burden. The lid closes, leaving him in darkness. He goes Right, where we hear a sort of SCRAPING sound, as of something being dragged or pushed along the floor. All this is heard but not seen. He then goes back to the chest and lifts the lid.*

UNIDENTIFIED MAN *backs into faint blue light and begins to descend through chest, the lid closing slowly. As the lid is almost closed, he laughs. The lid closes, smothering the laugh and leaving the stage in darkness.*

A small blurred light is seen moving along the path outside, past the curtained French window Left Center. Sound of front DOOR being opened.

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MULLIGAN. *(Off Right Center)* Now we're going to start at the beginning of this thing! (MULLIGAN *enters doors Right Center, followed by* MARSDEN. *Light precedes them, because* MULLIGAN *is carrying 60-watt bulb which is attached to a long cord)* Believe *me*, Chief—I've looked the whole grounds over and I ain't found a *sign* of Garrity. *(Follows* MARSDEN *down Center.)*

MARSDEN. *(Hopefully)* Mulligan, do you think he might have picked up some trace of Miss Denby and followed it?

MULLIGAN. Could be — but I doubt it. Jeff said he saw that sailor running through the apple orchard like an antelope. I thought maybe Garrity might have followed him — *(Holds up bulb)* Where do you want this put?

MARSDEN. As near that chest as possible.

MULLIGAN. *(Goes Left)* I'd like to get my mitts on the guy that cut them wires.

MARSDEN. *(A step toward* MULLIGAN) We've got to work fast, Mulligan. Dousing those lights has delayed my whole plan. *(Looking up at mounted caribou head)* Hang it over those antlers.

MULLIGAN. Good idea. *(Steps up on lid of chest)* And that was a swell idea you had to hook this cord up with the automobile batteries. I was surprised. *(Drops cord over one of the farthest extended tines of the antlers)* I thought they used gaslight at Scotland Yard.

MARSDEN. We dabble in electricity a little. *(Crosses up Left Center to telephone)* We've even got automobiles.

MULLIGAN. Yeah? *(Adjusting bulb)* How's that for height?

MARSDEN. *(Turns)* Just right.

MULLIGAN. *(Steps down from chest)* First time I ever collaborated with Scotland Yard. Together we ought to cancel this case in a hurry. (MARSDEN *is examining phone cord)* You know, I think we scared those guys away.

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MARSDEN. Perhaps you're right — *(Lifts phone cord to show it has been cut)* They snipped this phone cord but evidently were in too great a hurry to cut the one in the library.

MULLIGAN. You don't say? *(Smugly)* We've got 'em licked, Chief. We'll find Miss Denby before you know it.

MARSDEN. I hope you're right. *(Crosses table Center)* Now here's what I'd like you to do, Mulligan: get the other long cord from my car and connect it to the Cadillac in the garage. *(Takes bulb from pocket; hands it to* MULLIGAN) Put this in the socket, turn it on and hand it *directly* over that trap door in garage floor.

MULLIGAN. Okay, Chief. *(Starts toward Right Center doors.)*

MARSDEN. And let me know if Garrity shows up.

MULLIGAN. Check! *(Crosses to doors Right Center as* SIMMONS *enters down the stairs, carrying her flashlight in one hand and a lighted oil lamp in the other. To* SIMMONS, *indicating* MARSDEN) I think this guy is gonna be a big help.

*(*SIMMONS *looks after him, amused. Crosses briskly down Right and speaks to* MARSDEN, *who is looking into the darkness of room off Right 1.)*

SIMMONS. Well, I went all through the upper part of the house. *(Indicates oil lamp)* Look what I found.

MARSDEN. Good. Put it in there, will you?

SIMMONS. Okay. *(Goes into room Right 1 with lamp. LIGHT in Right 1 on.)*

MARSDEN. What about that sailor's room?

SIMMONS. *(From room Right 1)* I found something there, too. *(She re-enters and takes a scrap of cloth from her pocket)* I found this on the window sill of his room.

MARSDEN. *(Takes cloth and examines it)* A piece of his jacket. Went through the window, eh?

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SIMMONS. Yes. Jeff still swears he saw him running away from the house, headed across the grounds.

MARSDEN. *(Looks at scrap of cloth, frowns thoughtfully)* Simmons, we've got to find that sailor.

SIMMONS. *(Right Center)* Do you think he's part of the setup?

MARSDEN. I'm sure of *this* much: he knows something *we* ought to know.

SIMMONS. Look, Van — he couldn't be a part of The Gorilla mob. They hit him on the head.

MARSDEN. They didn't hit him. I did.

SIMMONS. *You* did?

MARSDEN. I think so. In the darkness a rather large man grabbed Mr. Stevens, and when I interfered he struck me with his fist. Another man brushed against me and I hit him with the butt of my gun. He fell forward against me — I'm sure he wore a sailor's uniform.

SIMMONS. *(Elevates eyebrows) I'll* say he knows something! *(Writes in notebook)* Say, Van — I've got a raft of stuff to write. How soon can I break this story?

MARSDEN. I could close the whole case in twenty minutes, but for one thing —

SIMMONS. *(Interested)* Yeah? What's that?

MARSDEN. Alice.

SIMMONS. I don't get it.

MARSDEN. I have a sure way of capturing anybody that's concealed in that cellar — but I can't do it as long as Alice is missing.

SIMMONS. *(Puzzled; thinks a moment)* Let's run over that once more, will you?

MARSDEN. *(Crosses to Left, then back to* SIMMONS. *Produces a small cylinder from hip pocket)* Do you know what this is?

SIMMONS. No — do you?

MARSDEN. It's good old reliable tear gas. *(Looks Left.)*

SIMMONS. *(Looks at bomb curiously)* What are you going to do with it?

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MARSDEN. There are two entrances to that cellar. One is through a trap door in the garage floor, and the other is right there — *(Points to chest)* We plant this tear-jerker under the garage trap door and roll a car on top of it. Then we wait here for what comes out of that chest.

SIMMONS. *(Crosses to chest, looks down at it — then to* MARSDEN) That's a great idea! What are we waiting for? *(Crosses down.)*

MARSDEN. *(Crosses to* SIMMONS, *Center)* I can't do it because I think Alice is in that cellar. Until we get her out — the scheme's no good.

JEFF. *(As we hear front DOOR open)* Mr. Van Cleave! *(Rushes through door Right Center)* Mr. Mulligan told me to rush right over — *(Pauses to catch breath)* — to rush right over — *(breathlessly)* — to rush right over —

SIMMONS. You ought to be here by now.

JEFF. Mr. Mulligan told me to rush right over and say — that sailor ran into the garage and disappeared!

(MARSDEN *turns to* SIMMONS.)

SIMMONS. That lad gets around!

MARSDEN. *(Crosses to door Right Center)* Simmons! Keep your eye on that chest. *(Starts to exit Right Center, again turns to* SIMMONS) Still got that gun?

SIMMONS. Oh, sure. *(Takes gun out of coat pocket.)*

MARSDEN. *(Crosses to* JEFF *up Left Center — points to chest)* If anything comes out of that cellar — send Jeff. *(Exits Right Center.)*

SIMMONS. *(Crosses to* JEFF *Left Center. Takes his hand — puts gun in it. To* JEFF) If anything comes out of that cellar you send *me. (Crosses to Right 1. Looks out door.)*

JEFF. *(To Center)* Miss Simmons, there ain't no use bein' scared any more.

SIMMONS. *(Crosses up Left Center)* But if you don't mind I *will* be. It helps pass the time.

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JEFF. I ain't as scared as I *was*. Not since I know that Mr. Marsden is Mr. Van Cleave. He sho' is smart, ain't he?

SIMMONS. He can see around corners. *(Crosses over Right Center)* He'd been watching this house for a week before Mr. Stevens got here. When he found your telegram he wanted to know just who Alice Denby was. So he went to Philadelphia and framed that ticket mix-up — and framed himself into the most humid love affair since "Duel In The Sun." *(Crosses up Right Center — looks out window in hall.)*

JEFF. *(Still holding gun)*. You want me to *keep* this gun?

SIMMONS. Sure. *(Crosses over to Right 1 door)* Why not? I don't need a gun. There's nothing to shoot at; and if there *was* I couldn't hit it; and if I did hit it, it would disappear and send me a laugh by radio. *(Crosses over Right Center. Starts to light cigarette)* How is it that you and Miss Denby have been seeing a gorilla all night? Why haven't *I* seen it?

JEFF. Because you're lucky, that's why!

SIMMONS. Nuts! *(Finishes lighting cigarette)* I don't believe *anybody's* seen a gorilla.

(GREEN STRIP on — outside Right Center window. THE GORILLA'S face (animal) appears at the window. SIMMONS sees it, but JEFF does not.)

SIMMONS. *(Trying to say something to* JEFF. *Her face contorts in a manner that amuses him)* Beebum— ah——igum —

JEFF. *(Grins)* I know what that is. It's iguff-eyeguff language. Miss Alice used to talk it. It goes, "Eeguff, eyeguff, I want a piece of pieguff."

(SIMMONS, *badly frightened, exits Right 1.* JEFF, *laughing heartily, looks after her.)*

JEFF. You sho' is funny, Miss Simmons — *(Still*

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laughing — he turns) — you keeps everybody in a good humor — *(Sees* GORILLA *at window — stops suddenly. The* GORILLA *shows his teeth. Scared stiff* JEFF *starts away from the window toward Left — his frightened eyes on the animal)* Go 'way! Go 'way! *(Pantomime ad lib. He affects an air of nonchalance as he starts slowly toward door Right 1 casting looks over his shoulder at* GORILLA. *His pistol still in his hand, he whistles a tune as he strolls toward door, trying to impress the animal with his indifference. Suddenly he makes a break, and dashes out of door Right 1. The chest opens and the* SAILOR *enters quickly from it.* GORILLA *disappears from window. The chest lid closes with a bang.* SAILOR *looks about then dashes off Right Center to Right. A SHOT is heard offstage Right and the* GORILLA *springs through the window up Right Center. In one hand he carries a small scrap of* ALICE'S *dress. He starts toward Left, seems undecided, then goes Right; finally pauses at closet door Right 2. He runs his paws around the edges of the door, and seems to be interested in something inside. He drops scrap of* ALICE'S *dress, crosses Left, enters the chest and exits downward. LIGHTS down a bit for* GORILLA, *then back to mark.* JEFF *pokes his head cautiously in window Right Center, a smoking revolver in his hand. He jumps in window and starts Right. Sound of front DOOR opening.)*

MARSDEN. *(Off Right Center)* Jeff! (JEFF *turns, startled. When* MARSDEN *enters, followed by* SIMMONS, JEFF *laughs nervously)* What happened?

JEFF. That gorilla again! He was at that window.

MARSDEN. And you shot him?

JEFF. No, suh — *at* him.

(MARSDEN *grips his gun and quickly goes through door Right 1.)*

SIMMONS. Van! Wait for *me! (Exits Right 1.)*

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(JEFF *looks toward window Right Center. Turns — starts Left. Sees chest lid opening — moves back. Lid up. The* STRANGER *— the man* GARRITY *found in* STEVENS' *chair in Act One — comes up. He wears a hat and is ready for a getaway. Lid down.* JEFF *stares at him surprised.)*

JEFF. Mr. Langham! (STRANGER *sees him)* Where'd you come from?

STRANGER. Shut up!

JEFF. What you doin' down in that hole?

STRANGER. None of your damned business.

JEFF. Mr. Stevens didn't hire you to—— I thought you went to a dance!

STRANGER. You did, eh? *(Laughs)* So you and Stevens really fell for that gardener stuff! *(Hard)* Now listen, Jeff. I'm going to beat it and you're going to stay here and keep your mouth shut.

JEFF. No, I ain't. Where's Miss Alice?

STRANGER. I don't know — and I don't care.

JEFF. *(Becomes recklessly aggressive)* I know! You're in with The Gorilla. You and him got Miss Alice —

STRANGER. *(Makes a start for him)* Don't be a sucker! *(Thinks of another plan. Takes roll of bills from pocket, offers them to* JEFF) Here, take this. It'll make it worth your while to hear nothing, see nothing and tell nothing.

JEFF. *(Looks at money)* Never mind that! *(Hand on his hip pocket)* Where's Miss Alice? *(Crosses over to Left Center. Blocks way out)* You're gonna tell me — You ain't gettin' out of here till you do! I mean it!

STRANGER. You're not asking for it — you're demanding it.

(Draws gun and fires at JEFF. JEFF *staggers around to Center and falls.* STRANGER *crosses to doors Right Center, turns toward* JEFF, *and is just about to exit when* JEFF *raises up on elbow and fires two*

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shots. STRANGER *staggers just inside the hallway, drops his gun and leans against the wall above Left door.* SIMMONS *and* MULLIGAN *enter Right 1.)*

SIMMONS. *(Crosses to* JEFF *Center)* Jeff! *(Picks up* JEFF'S *gun.)*

MULLIGAN. *(Crosses to Left Center)* Jeff! Good Lord, they got him. (STRANGER, *up Right Center laughs.* MULLIGAN *turns, sees* STRANGER — *crosses up to him)* Who are you? *(Pulls him down Center a bit.)*

STRANGER. What do *you* think?

(Reaches for gun on floor, but MULLIGAN *gets it.)*

MULLIGAN. *(Straightens up; to* SIMMONS) Well! Looks like we've got The Gorilla. *(To* STRANGER) Where's Garrity?

STRANGER. You mean the dumb shom? *(Makes a circle with thumb and forefinger.)*

MULLIGAN. You know who I mean. *(Grabs his hand and starts to handcuff him.)*

STRANGER. What are you going to do — work me over?

MULLIGAN. Just for laughs. *(Finishes handcuffing him)* Now — are you gonna belch or not?

STRANGER. *(With a short laugh)* Look who's asking!

MARSDEN. *(Enters Right 1 door; crosses to* MULLIGAN *and* STRANGER) What's happened, Mulligan?

STRANGER *(Stunned)* Van Cleave!

MARSDEN. *(To* MULLIGAN) Who's this?

MULLIGAN. The Gorilla — who else?

SIMMONS. *(Center)* Van — Jeff's been shot.

MARSDEN. *(Seeing him)* Jeff! *(Crosses to* JEFF) Where'd he get you, Jeff?

(JEFF *indicates spot.)*

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MULLIGAN. *(To* STRANGER) Doped me, eh? *(Grins)* Well, rubber hose ain't hard to get any more, Buddy.

MARSDEN. *(To* SIMMONS) Get a doctor, quick! (SIMMONS *starts up Center for phone)* That phone's been cut. There's one in the library. (SIMMONS *exits Right Center down hallway Left.* STRANGER *winces from pain)* Mulligan, you'd better put Jeff in there. *(Points Right 1.* MULLIGAN *crosses to* JEFF. *He and* MARSDEN *help* JEFF *to his feet)* Easy now! Easy!

MULLIGAN. *(Guiding* JEFF) Think it's a cash-in, Chief?

MARSDEN. *(Softly)* I'm afraid it is.

STRANGER. *(Down a bit)* Gave him a permanent, eh? That's good.

(MULLIGAN *exits Right 1 with* JEFF.)

MARSDEN. *(Takes hold of* STRANGER, *pulls him down Center under light)* Come on — let's have a look at you in the light. Where'd it get you?

STRANGER. *(Casually)* In my shoulder.

MARSDEN. *(Examines the wound)* You'll be all right. We're sending for a doctor. Now! You and I can save a lot of time by being frank with each other. Has any harm come to Miss Denby?

STRANGER. I don't know anything about it.

MARSDEN. Just who are you?

STRANGER. I work here as gardener. Miss Denby knows that.

MARSDEN. Then you're one of the chaps I've been looking for. *(Appraises him for a moment)* Let's try not to underrate each other.

STRANGER. That's a smart idea.

MARSDEN. I'm willing to bargain with you: help me find Miss Denby and I'll make things easy for you.

STRANGER. I don't know what you're talking about.

(MULLIGAN *enters Right 1 and goes to* MARSDEN *Right Center.)*

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MARSDEN. Okay. Is that all you want to say?

STRANGER. *(Sees* MULLIGAN) Only one more thing.

MARSDEN. Shoot.

STRANGER. Why is a high class detective like you running around with a squareheaded mug like that!

(Nods toward MULLIGAN, *who is apoplectic)*

MARSDEN. Take him, Mulligan. *(Crosses up Right Center.)*

MULLIGAN. I'll take him all right! *(Crosses to* STRANGER — *pulls him to Right Center, starts to hit him — stops)* Oh, I can't do what I want to do — but you can't stop me from thinking.

STRANGER. I can stop you easier than I could start you.

SIMMONS. *(Enters doors Right Center. Crosses to* MARSDEN) I called a doctor at Huntington. He's coming right over. *(Sees scrap of* ALICE'S *dress on floor at closet door Right 2. Picks it up)* What's this?

MARSDEN *(Crosses quickly and takes piece of cloth from her. Reacts sharply)* It's a piece of Alice's dress!

SIMMONS. Oh! *(As it dawns on her)* That gorilla!

(MARSDEN *looks about quickly, then jerks open the closet door. This reveals a huddled figure, wrapped and bound in white canvas — same as brought up from chest at opening of Act.)*

SIMMONS. It's Miss Denby!

MARSDEN. *(Excitedly — ad lib.)* Come on — get a chair! Get those ropes off! (SIMMONS *goes up Left, gets a chair.* MARSDEN *and* MULLIGAN *carry figure down Right Center.* SIMMONS *crosses down with chair and they sit the bound figure in it)* Quick! Let's get this off —

(Takes off top hood and GARRITY'S *face is revealed. Ad lib.* ALL.)

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ALL. Garrity!

SIMMONS. *(Laughs)* Ha! Ha! Ha!

GARRITY. *(To* SIMMONS) Ha! Ha! Ha! What a swell time *you're* havin'!

SIMMONS. *(Unable to control her laughter, grabs* MULLIGAN'S *arm and points)* Look at him — His *Wedding* Day! *(Continues laughing as she walks up to* STRANGER.)

(MARSDEN *unties the ropes.)*

MULLIGAN. Say — how did you get in there? *(Indicates closet.)*

GARRITY. *(Testily)* I don't know *how* I got in there and I don't know *why* I got in there. All *I* know is that I was pulled into that fireplace.

MULLIGAN. *(Looks Left)* Fireplace?

(MARSDEN *takes ropes from around* GARRITY.)

MULLIGAN. *(Disgusted)* You're a hell of a detective.

GARRITY. Yeah! But *you're* all right.

MULLIGAN. Yeah! All I need is a good partner.

GARRITY. Is that so!

(Ad lib. argument MULLIGAN *and* GARRITY)

MARSDEN. Stop it! *(To* MULLIGAN) You're being ridiculous!

MULLIGAN. You don't know him, Chief. He stinks.

(GARRITY *rises indignantly.)*

MARSDEN. *(To* GARRITY — *forcing him back in chair)* Now you tell me just what happened.

MULLIGAN. Yeah. Tell him all you know. It won't take long.

GARRITY. I'll tell him all we *both* know. It won't take any longer.

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SIMMONS. *(Comes down)* Why waste your time, Van? Garrity couldn't find a barrel of limburger in a one-room apartment.

(GARRITY *rises angrily.* MARSDEN *puts him back in chair ad lib.)*

MULLIGAN. *(To* SIMMONS) Now wait a minute! What do *you* know about his work? Where do *you* tend *bar* — riding this guy!

SIMMONS. How do you *like* that! You were razzing him, weren't you?

MULLIGAN. That's all right. He's my partner — I've got a right to razz him.

(GARRITY *puts out hand.* MULLIGAN *takes it — shakes it.)*

MARSDEN. *(To* SIMMONS) Go in and take a look at Jeff. *(Moves to Left Center.)*

SIMMONS. Okay, Van. *(Exits down Right 1.)*

GARRITY. Okay, Van! Where does she get that familiar stuff? *(To* MARSDEN) What's the matter with Jeff?

(STRANGER *moves over — up Center.)*

MARSDEN. He's been shot.

GARRITY. *(Rises, crosses to* MARSDEN *Left Center)* Shot? Who done it?

(STRANGER *laughs.* GARRITY *turns and sees him. Amazed, reacts — making strange sounds.* STRANGER *smiles.)*

MULLIGAN. What's the matter?

GARRITY. *(Excited) That's* the guy we thought was Stevens!

MULLIGAN. Huh?

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GARRITY. The guy that was sittin' in the chair with Stevens' robe on!

(MULLIGAN *and* MARSDEN *exchange glances.)*

MULLIGAN. *(Looks at* STRANGER *with sardonic grin)* M-m-h-h! What a sweet session *you're* in for!

(Ad lib. MULLIGAN *and* GARRITY.)

GARRITY. *(Crosses to* STRANGER, *sees he is handcuffed)* So you're goin' to toy around with me, eh? *(Pulls* STRANGER *down, sits him on chair Right of table)* I told you I'd get you. Smart trick you pulled. Grandstand stuff. *(Quoting* STRANGER'S *speech)* He says — "I got the dumb one. He's bound, gagged and handcuffed." Hah!

(Snaps his fingers at STRANGER. *Turns to* MARSDEN — *ad lib. pantomime.* MULLIGAN *laughs, then stops suddenly.)*

MULLIGAN. Wait a minute! Wait a minute! I want to ask this guy a question. *(Turns to* STRANGER) When you held a gun on Garrity tonight, who were the *three guys* that jumped him?

GARRITY. *(Crosses to* MULLIGAN, *confused)* Aw! Why waste time with him, Mulligan? He'll only lie out of it.

STRANGER. What do you mean — *three guys?* I tied Garrity up myself.

GARRITY. *(To* MULLIGAN) There! There you are! What did I tell you? He's just a nutural born liar, that's all.

MARSDEN. Never mind, fellows. *(To* STRANGER) You know, of course, that The Gorilla is holding Cyrus Stevens. Do you know why?

STRANGER. Yes.

MULLIGAN. Do you know where?

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STRANGER. Yes.

GARRITY. You can take it from me, he knows *all* about it.

MARSDEN. Where's that sailor?

MULLIGAN. Yeah — and *who* is he?

STRANGER. You're talking Greek.

MULLIGAN. *(Aggressively)* We're talkin' Turkey!

MARSDEN. *(Waving* MULLIGAN *to silence)* Let it go. *(To* GARRITY) I want you to go to the garage, put out the light, and wait. Just wait. If that sailor shows up put a gun on him and bring him here. Mulligan will explain the setup out there.

(Starts to go Right. DOCTOR *appears at door Right Center, carrying a small physician's kit.)*

DOCTOR. I beg your pardon (ALL *turn)* You sent for a doctor?

MARSDEN. *(Crossing to him)* Yes. Please come in. (MULLIGAN *and* GARRITY *move up Right ad lib.)* We have two patients. The more serious case is in here — *(Starts toward door Right 1.)* Will you come with me, please?

(MARSDEN *and* DOCTOR *exit Right 1.* STRANGER *sits on chair Right Center.)*

MULLIGAN. *(To* GARRITY) Ps-s-s-t! (GARRITY *crosses to him)* We found a trap door in the floor of that garage. Van Cleave thinks it's the entrance to the cellar, like I said. He wants that sailor brought in *alive* — for questioning. Understand?

GARRITY. I get it. *(Starts Right Center. Stops, looks at* STRANGER; *gives him the raspberry. Exits Right Center to front door.)*

(MULLIGAN *crosses toward* STRANGER, *stops and turns as he hears* DOCTOR *and* MARSDEN *enter Right 1.)*

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DOCTOR. Looks pretty bad.

MARSDEN. Do you think he has a chance?

DOCTOR. I'm afraid not. Where's the other patient?

MULLIGAN. *(Crosses to Left of* STRANGER *on chair)* Right here, Doc.

MARSDEN. This is Mr. Mulligan, Dr. Wilner.

MULLIGAN. Howdy, Doc?

DOCTOR *(Nods)* Mr. Mulligan.

MARSDEN. He'll give you whatever help you need. *(Exits Right 1.)*

DOCTOR. *(To* MARSDEN) Thank you. *(To* STRANGER) Well, young fellow, let's have a look at you. *(Makes examination and straightens up)* You were very lucky. *(Takes a bandage cloth and bottle from kit)* We'll wash that out for you. You'll be all right. Mr. Mulligan, will you hold his coat open for a minute, please? (MULLIGAN *leans over* STRANGER *and holds back his coat)* Thank you. (DOCTOR *saturates bandage cloth with contents of bottle, talking all the while)* You know — an inch and a half lower and that would have caused you a lot of trouble.

(DOCTOR *leans over to place bandage holding one end in each hand. During this action he suddenly throws the bandage over* MULLIGAN'S *nose, holding the ends tightly at the back of his head.* MULLIGAN *puts up a violent struggle for two or three seconds, but soon weakens and goes out under the influence of the drug. Acting quietly,* DOCTOR *lays* MULLIGAN *on the floor.)*

STRANGER. The keys are in his vest pocket.

DOCTOR. *(Low voice)* Quiet now — don't talk. *(Crosses, gets handcuff keys from* MULLIGAN. *Crosses to* STRANGER, *unlocks cuffs. Crosses, picks up kit)* Come on, let's get out of here.

(They make a quiet but hurried dash for the Right Center doors and are about to exit when GARRITY

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strolls in from front door and calmly confronts them with drawn pistol.)

GARRITY. What's your hurry, Doctor?

DOCTOR. *(Heatedly)* Confound it, sir! What do you think you're doing?

GARRITY. Tut, tut, now! It ain't nice for a doctor to lose his patience. *(Backs them down Center)* The first thing you're goin' to do is bring Mulligan out of dreamland. Go ahead, make it snappy. (MULLIGAN *moans through this.* DOCTOR *puts bag on table Center, crosses and removes bandage from* MULLIGAN'S *nose.* GARRITY *grins at* STRANGER) You're fixin' things swell for yourself, ain't you?

MULLIGAN. *(Moans — rises; struggles to his feet, very groggy)* You think he'll get well, eh, Doctor? That's too bad.

GARRITY. Just take it easy, Mulligan. They slipped it to you again. *(Turns to* DOCTOR) Now, tell us about yourself, Mister. We'd *love* to know.

DOCTOR. *(Turns to* STRANGER) This is it, Eddie. If you weren't crippled we could take him.

GARRITY. Oh, yeah?

STRANGER. What do you want to do?

DOCTOR. I'll make it easy for both of us — *(To* GARRITY) All right — I cut in on that phone message to the doctor. I've got a connection in the cellar. It was a long chance to take — my coming here. But I like to take them; I've *always* liked to take them. We're yours, Garrity. I'm sick of the whole game anyway.

GARRITY. Well, so am I. But who are you?

DOCTOR. *(With resignation)* I'm The Gorilla.

MULLIGAN. *(Hears above and snaps out of it)* Huh?

GARRITY. *(Turns to* MULLIGAN) Well, big boy — it's wrapped up.

MULLIGAN. *(Brightly)* We got The Gorilla!

GARRITY. *(Quickly) We?*

MULLIGAN. *(Happily)* We're *in,* Garrity! Where's that reporter?

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SIMMONS. *(Entering Right 1)* Right here! What gives?

MULLIGAN *and* GARRITY. *(Joining hands, they sing and dance about)* We got The Gorilla! We got The Gorilla!

SIMMONS. Don't be a sap, Mulligan. That's the Doctor.

MULLIGAN. Yeah? Well, Sister, he just confessed!

SIMMONS. *(Puzzled — to* DOCTOR) Is that on the level?

DOCTOR *(Nods)* They're right.

(MULLIGAN *grabs the* DOCTOR *and pulls him Right Center.)*

SIMMONS. Well, for the — *(Turns suddenly, runs to Right 1 door — calls)* Van! Oh, Van! Come in here!

MARSDEN. *(Enters Right 1 door)* What is it?

SIMMONS. I want you to meet — *(Gestures)* — The Gorilla!

MARSDEN. What? *(Looks at* GARRITY, *crosses to* MULLIGAN.)

MULLIGAN. We nailed him, Chief. Confession and everything.

(MARSDEN *crosses to Right of* DOCTOR.)

DOCTOR. That's right, Van Cleave. This is one of my most useful men. *(Indicates* STRANGER) I took a chance and tried to save him.

MULLIGAN. *(To* DOCTOR) Where's Cyrus Stevens?

DOCTOR. He's perfectly safe. I'll tell you where and how to find him.

(MULLIGAN *to Right.)*

MARSDEN *(Quickly)* Where is Miss Denby?

DOCTOR. I don't know.

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MARSDEN. You *do* know. And if you're smart you'll tell me.

MULLIGAN. Yeah. We can make this thing very polite if you'll just — er — extend a little courtesy.

GARRITY. Pretty is as pretty does.

DOCTOR. I tell you I don't know anything about Miss Denby.

STRANGER. *I* told you that.

GARRITY. *(To* DOCTOR) Hey! Where's your gorilla?

DOCTOR. What do you mean?

GARRITY. You know what I mean. The hairy faced Zulu that's been runnin' around here all night.

MULLIGAN. Never mind the zoological part of this. We've got The Gorilla — that's the thing. *(Turns to* MARSDEN) Some catch, eh, Van Cleave?

MARSDEN. Very important. You're to be congratulated, Mulligan.

GARRITY. *(Clears throat)* Ahem!

MARSDEN. You too, Garrity. (GARRITY *makes a circle with thumb and forefinger)* But there's one person we've got to get before the case is closed.

MULLIGAN. Who's that?

MARSDEN. The Gorilla.

MULLIGAN. *(Sputtering)* Huh? What? Why, this guy's confessed he's The Gorilla — What more do you want?

MARSDEN. *(Calmly)* That man is *not* The Gorilla.

DOCTOR. *(Short laugh)* You don't suppose I'd say I was, if I wasn't, do you?

MARSDEN. Indeed I do. *(Turns to* MULLIGAN) This man came here impersonating The Gorilla — so we could take him away, thinking the case was closed. Then the *real* Mr. Gorilla could leave here at his leisure. (DOCTOR *glances at* STRANGER) Doctor, your loyalty is refreshing. I admire you for it.

MULLIGAN. *(Flaring up; to* MARSDEN) Say, what's the idea? We worked hard on this case and — Van Cleave or no Van Cleave — we ain't gonna throw it in the ashcan.

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GARRITY. *(To* MULLIGAN; *approvingly)* Well put.

MULLIGAN. *(Points to* DOCTOR) This guy confessed he's The Gorilla. You say he ain't. How do you *know* he ain't?

MARSDEN. Well — if you'll let me run this thing a little longer I'll prove it to you. *(Briskly)* Mulligan, put those two men in that room. *(Indicates room Right 1. Pushes* DOCTOR *Right)* And you, Simmons — *(Hands her* JEFF'S *gun)* — sit in there with this gun on them — and shoot the first man that makes a break.

(MARSDEN *moves up Center,* SIMMONS *swallows hard.)*

MULLIGAN. *(Ad lib.)* Come on! Get a move on! Hurry, I said.

(SIMMONS *follows* MULLIGAN, *with ad lib. looks.* MULLIGAN *shoves the two men in and stops at the door. Gestures for* SIMMONS *to enter.)*

MULLIGAN. *(To* SIMMONS, *as she exits)* Shoot if you must.

GARRITY. *(To* MARSDEN) Now listen, Buddy: do you realize you just took ten grand out of our hands?

MARSDEN. I'm sorry, Garrity. Things are just postponed a bit, that's all.

MULLIGAN. All right! *(Rubs his hands briskly)* Now we're gonna start at the beginning of this thing. *(Crosses to* MARSDEN.)

MARSDEN. That's the spirit. I'm sure we'll clean it up in no time now.

MAN'S VOICE. *(Off stage French window, up Left Center. Loud knock on window; calls weakly)* Let me in! For God's sake — open up!

(ALL *turn toward French window.* MAN *kicks window.)*

GARRITY. I think there's somebody at that window.

MARSDEN. Open it!

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GARRITY. *(Starts up Left Center — stops)* Who, me?
MULLIGAN. Yes — you!
GARRITY. Why not you?
MULLIGAN. You're the nearest.

*(*GARRITY *slowly crosses to the window and opens it. The* SAILOR *staggers in with* ALICE *in his arms. She is wrapped in a raincoat. He comes to Center, lays her in* MARSDEN'S *arms, then stands there in a daze.)*

MARSDEN. Alice!
MULLIGAN. Well, what d'ya know!
GARRITY. *(Left Center)* Is she hurt?
SAILOR. *(Weakly)* She's all right! The Gorilla — *(Collapses into* GARRITY'S *arms.)*
MULLIGAN. What's the matter with him? *(To* MARSDEN) Is she all right?
MARSDEN. Yes. You take her, Mulligan — and get some water. *(Puts* ALICE *in* MULLIGAN'S *arms)* There's not a second to waste — we've got to get Mr. Stevens back as quickly as possible. *(To* GARRITY) Take care of that sailor. See that he stays here. *(Takes tear bomb from pocket)* I'll be right back.

(Runs out Right Center doors. Sound of front DOOR quickly opening and closing.)

GARRITY. *(Dragging* SAILOR) What'll I do with this guy?
MULLIGAN. *(Holding* ALICE, *nods toward arm chair Left Center)* Put him in that chair.
GARRITY. *(Looks down at* SAILOR, *then at* MULLIGAN *holding* ALICE) I *would* draw the sailor! *(Drags* SAILOR *in circle toward chair Left Center. Looks down at him)* Come on! You're draggin' your anchor! *(Drops* SAILOR *into chair. Straightens him out. Takes a quill toothpick from pocket and stands beside chair, picking his teeth.)*

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(MULLIGAN *puts* ALICE *in armchair at Right of table.)*

ALICE *(Coming to)* Where am I? Arthur! *(Sees* MULLIGAN) Oh, it's Mr. Mulligan.

MULLIGAN. Better take it easy, Miss.

ALICE. Where is Mr. Marsden?

MULLIGAN. He's all right. He'll be here in a minute. Just keep calm.

ALICE. Have you found my uncle?

MULLIGAN. *(Soothingly)* No. But we'll have him soon.

JEFF. *(Staggers in from Right 1 in delirium)* Don't be afraid, Miss Alice! *(Crosses to Right Center toward* ALICE — *staggers.* MULLIGAN *catches him and holds him)* He ain't gonna do nothin' to you! — Not while I'm here, he ain't — Sure, Colonel Denby — of course I'll take care of Miss Alice — Seems like only last week she was no bigger than a cotton ball — now she's three years old! My, my! Three years old! — No-no! Tain't snow, honey — tain't snow at all! — Them's cotton fields — *(His voice fades to a whisper)* — cotton fields. *(Falls back into* MULLIGAN'S *arms — dead.)*

MULLIGAN. I'm sorry, Miss. He was shot.

(ALICE *buries her face in her hands.* MARSDEN *enters Right Center, sees situation.* ALICE *crosses and meets him. He puts his arm about her. She cries quietly into handkerchief.* MARSDEN *motions to* MULLIGAN *to take* JEFF *off Right 1.* MULLIGAN *turns toward* GARRITY.)

MULLIGAN. *(Pause)* Garrity. *(Motions for him to take* JEFF.)

(ALICE *crosses to Center.)*

GARRITY. *(Crosses down to* MULLIGAN, *takes* JEFF *and looks down at him as he goes)* Poor devil! *(Exits Right 1 with* JEFF. ALICE *follows them off, crying*

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softly. MARSDEN *to Center.* GARRITY *re-enters, crosses to* MARSDEN *Center)* Who's next, Chief?

(Faint SMOKE starts coming out of the closed chest.)

MARSDEN. *(Crosses to chest and stoops down)* There'll be plenty to do in a moment. I planted a tear bomb in that cellar entrance. Now watch those rats run. *(Straightens up)* Out of sight, boys. You over there, Garrity — back of that desk. *(Indicates secretary up Center)* Just inside that arch, Mulligan. *(Points up Left Center.* MULLIGAN *goes to arch Left Center)* And what ever you do — don't make a sound.

MULLIGAN. *(At arch Left Center)* Not a sound.

GARRITY. Not a sound. *(Gets tangled up with a Chinese gong and makes a reverberating, multi-toned clangor. Ad lib. as he silences the gong.)*

MARSDEN. *(Crosses to chest)* Sh-h-h! Quiet!

(Pulls light chain over chest. All LIGHTS out except faint light off Right 1, which shines on SAILOR. SAILOR *moans and sits up.)*

GARRITY. Play dumb, Sailor! Play dumb!

(SAILOR *lies back in chair. Pause. The chest lid opens slowly, SMOKE coming from interior.* THE GORILLA *(animal) springs out and starts up Center and* GARRITY *points gun at him.)*

MULLIGAN *and* GARRITY. Hands up! Get 'em up!

SAILOR *(Jumps up and stands in light from door Right 1.)* Don't shoot! Don't shoot! (MARSDEN *pulls light chain, LIGHTS up)* I'll handle him. *(To* GORILLA) Come here. Come here, I say! (GORILLA *slinks over to the* SAILOR) Lie down. (GORILLA *lies down at* SAILOR'S *feet.)*

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(ALL *have watched this in silent amazement.)*

MULLIGAN. Well, cut me down!

SAILOR. He's all right when I'm around.

GARRITY. Then you'd better stick around.

SAILOR. He's a pet.

MULLIGAN. *(To* MARSDEN) A pet, he says.

MARSDEN. *(A pause while he scrutinizes the* SAILOR) How long have you had this — er — pet?

SAILOR. He's been on the ship for nearly two years. Got him in Africa. Tonight he got away and I followed him. He got into Mr. Stevens' house —

MARSDEN. *(Quickly)* How did you know it was Mr. Stevens' house?

SAILOR. Well — you see, when this gorilla smashed the kitchen window someone ran past me yelling "Mr. Stevens!" I think it was you.

(GARRITY *consults* MULLIGAN *with a look.)*

MARSDEN. Go ahead, please. What happened then?

SAILOR. Well, when The Gorilla climbed through the window I followed him. Then somebody put the lights out and I had to just sort of grope my way toward the front of the house.

MARSDEN. Why did you want to get to the front of the house?

SAILOR. Because that's the way Poe went.

GARRITY. Who?

SAILOR. *(Indicates* GORILLA) This fellow.

GARRITY. Oh — *that* Poe.

MARSDEN. But you managed to go directly to Mr. Stevens, didn't you?

SAILOR. I don't know where I went. It was dark — and I was hit on the head.

MARSDEN. *(Crosses to* SAILOR — *eyeing him fixedly)* That gorilla of yours carried Mr. Stevens out of this room, didn't he?

SAILOR. *(Shrugs)* I don't know. I was unconscious.

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The next I knew I saw Poe going through a room with a girl in his arms. I was pretty weak but I followed him to the edge of the grounds. When he finally saw me he put the girl down and ran away.

MARSDEN. *(Eyeing him suspiciously — crosses to doors Right Center)* Would you mind waiting in the library for a moment — *(Indicating* GORILLA) — you and your friend?

SAILOR. Not at all. Come on, Poe. (GORILLA *crosses to him and* SAILOR *takes his hand)* Let's go —

GARRITY *(To* GORILLA) Yeah — scram!

(GORILLA *jumps away from* SAILOR, *grabs* GARRITY'S *leg and starts to chew on it.* SAILOR *rushes over, takes* GORILLA *by the hand and leads him up Right Center.* GARRITY *rubs his leg and limps.)*

SAILOR. *(To* GORILLA) Mustn't do that! When we get aboard ship I'll get you something *good* to eat. *(Goes through doors to hallway.)*

MARSDEN. *(Hands flashlight to* SAILOR) Better take this. The lights are out. *(Points Left)* It's that room — just beneath the staircase.

SAILOR. Okay. *(To* GORILLA) Come on, baby. *(Exits Left in hallway with* GORILLA.)

(MARSDEN *looks after him a moment, then closes the double doors. Turns to face* MULLIGAN, *who has crossed to Right Center.)*

MULLIGAN. Think we ought to leave that guy in there alone?

MARSDEN. I *want* him to be alone. If I give you the signal "twenty-two" that will mean you're to go into the library and handcuff him. But only if I say "twenty-two."

MULLIGAN. I get it. Only if you say "twenty-two."

MARSDEN. And have your gun ready when you go in.

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(Crossing down). Things ought to start popping here in about one minute.

GARRITY. Do you think that sailor is — ?

MARSDEN. I don't know *anything* at the moment — but it won't be long. *(Looks about)* Now — *(Points Right 1)* — close that door.

(MULLIGAN *crosses Right and closes door. SMOKE is coming out of the closed chest.)*

MARSDEN. Quiet now! Back to your places.

(They go to their places as before. MARSDEN *goes Left Center and pulls chain of hanging lamp. LIGHTS out. Stage in total darkness. The crouching figure of a man emerges from the chest. His back is to the audience and the faint greenish blue light from the chest is not sufficient to reveal his identity, although it can be seen that he carries a shiny revolver. He closes the chest lid and again the stage is in total darkness.* MULLIGAN *and* GARRITY *step forward with drawn pistols.)*

GARRITY. Get your hands up!

MULLIGAN. Drop that gun!

(THE MAN *drops the gun.)*

MARSDEN. Wait a minute, boys! *(He crosses to chest)* Now, Mr. Mulligan and Mr. Garrity — allow me to present The Gorilla!

(Door Right 1 opens slowly and ALICE *stands peering out. At the same time* MARSDEN *pulls chain of hanging lamp, revealing* STEVENS. *LIGHTS up to full mark.)*

ALICE. *(Incredulous)* My uncle!

MULLIGAN *and* GARRITY. Stevens!

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STEVENS. Well, Van Cleave — I suppose we can call it a night. Congratulations.

MARSDEN. *(Politely)* Thank you. *(Glances at* ALICE *— then to* STEVENS) If you'd like to say a few words at this point — you have the floor.

STEVENS. *(Smiles)* There really isn't much to say — except that I sent myself that "Gorilla" warning and called for these two high-class detectives, hoping to throw you off the track.

MARSDEN. Which wasn't clever at all. *(Turning)* Garrity, tell that sailor he can go. And tell him Miss Denby and I are very grateful to him.

(GARRITY *salutes and exits door Right Center, leaving them open.)*

ALICE. *(Crosses to* STEVENS) But, Uncle Cy — I —

MARSDEN. *(Interrupting her)* Just a moment, Alice. *(Turns to* STEVENS) Suppose you tell us what's happened to Miss Denby's uncle — Mr. Cyrus Stevens?

ALICE. *(Crosses to Right of* STEVENS) Why — why —isn't *he* my uncle?

STEVENS. *(Politely)* I'm sorry — very sorry indeed. Nothing would be more pleasing than to have a niece so charming. You see, my dear. I had been operating on these premises for some time when I learned that you and Mr. Stevens were coming. I found it necessary to remove him, and *very* convenient to pose as your uncle. As you had never seen him, that was quite easy. If you will accept my apology I shall be glad to present these gentlemen with an address where your uncle will be found safe and sound.

(GARRITY *enters Right Center doors.)*

MARSDEN. *(Crosses to* STEVENS) How's your hand?

(ALICE *to Right of* MARSDEN.)

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STEVENS. Oh, about the same.

MARSDEN. Let's have a look. *(Jerks the bandage off* STEVENS' *hand, revealing a gorilla's hand and arm.)*

(ALICE *screams — crosses to* GARRITY.)

MULLIGAN. A gorilla's arm!

STEVENS. Yes. A birthmark — and the sole cause of my criminal career. Some months before I was born my father was killed by a gorilla — in Africa. I was born with this — *(Pulls his sleeve up to show that the shaggy brown hair has grown all the way up his forearm, thinning out at his elbow. Extends his arm toward* MARSDEN *and flexes his claws.)* Suppose you had to carry this thing through life? Picture yourself with this, holding the hand of that lovely young creature. *(Indicating* ALICE.) Every criminal thing I've ever done has been done with this hand. It has stolen — murdered! It has got me into trouble, and it has got me out! (MULLIGAN *and* GARRITY *move a few steps toward him with guns drawn.)* And it will get me out again —! *(On this he reaches up and pulls the chain on the drop light. LIGHTS out, throwing the stage in darkness.* ALICE *screams.)*

(Curtain down: Working LIGHTS up. ad lib. shouts and confusion. SHOTS.)

(As soon as the Curtain strikes the stage THE GORILLA *(animal) is set at the Curtain line. outside the curtain Right* 1. *Pause Ad lib. SHOUTS, NOISE and SHOTS.)*

GARRITY. *(At edge of curtain Left* 1.) *Hey!* Mulligan! Mulligan! That hairy-faced Zulu's got away again!

(Paues. FOOTLIGHTS BLUE ½ up and come on.)

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(GORILLA *enters Right 1 and crosses to Right Center. Backs up, then runs and jumps over footlights and a part of the audience, landing in a center aisle.)*

(FOOTS up full amber — Pink — Blue.)

(The GORILLA *runs up the aisle about half way, then comes back and crosses past those seated in the front row to the opposite center aisle and runs up that aisle.* MULLIGAN *and* GARRITY, *followed by* SIMMONS *with her camera, leave the stage and follow him. This scene is exciting — and ad lib. because of certain audience participation.)*

MULLIGAN Follow me, Garrity! *(Crosses to Left aisle)* You go up that aisle, and I'll go up this one.

(Ad lib. — they go up opposite aisles, SIMMONS *after them.)*

SIMMONS. Wait a minute! Wait a minute! Don't shoot till I get a picture!

GARRITY. Where are you, Mulligan? Where the hell is Mulligan?

MULLIGAN. Right here. Where are *you?*

(Ad lib. dialogue chasing the GORILLA *up the aisle.* GARRITY *shoots at* GORILLA *when they are well out back. GREEN FOOTS out. Three SHOTS on stage.)*

(Curtain up — disclosing the living room. STEVENS *is seated where he was early in Act One — in arm-chair Right of table Center.* MARSDEN *is seated Left of table, a BABY SPOT on him as he reads the last page of his play.)*

MARSDEN. *(Reading)* "Suddenly the lights go out.

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In the darkness there is a terrific struggle. Two shots are fired. The lights go up. Mulligan (shouting from stairs below the cedar chest): "The Gorilla is dead. He fell down here and broke his neck."

STEVENS. *(BABY SPOT on him; rises)* Good! I'm damned glad to get rid of him! Marsden, that's the most remarkable thing I ever heard.

MARSDEN. *(Rises. Overjoyed)* Do you really mean that?

STEVENS. Yes — remarkable is the only word I can think of.

(LIGHTS. Border spots up 2 more — no foots.)

MARSDEN. Then you'll produce it for me?

STEVENS. *(Picks up check from table)* Here's my check for fifty thousand dollars. *(Hands it to* MARSDEN) I want absolute control.

MARSDEN. Of the play?

STEVENS. No — of you. Young fellow, you've got to be stopped!

ALICE. *(Comes down Right Center stairs in riding habit and hat. Crosses down Right Center)* Well — you certainly made a night of it. *(To* MARSDEN) It's time for that morning gallop, Arthur. *(To* STEVENS) How about a ride, Unc?

STEVENS. No, thanks, I just had one.

ALICE. *(To* MARSDEN) How did he like it?

STEVENS. I've bought it.

ALICE. Wonderful! *(To* MARSDEN) You must have given it a terrific reading!

MARSDEN. *(Smiles)* And I ad libbed a little too. Remember what I said about writing a play around this old house —?

STEVENS. *(Pacing up and down — thoughtfully)* You've got a quick mind. *(To* ALICE) Too quick! *(Turns to* MARSDEN *— quoting from the play)* Marsden — do you love my niece?

MARSDEN. Yes.

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(ALICE *backs away — puzzled)*

STEVENS. *(Grins)* That's from the play.

ALICE. *(To* MARSDEN) Good heavens! Has Unc gone crazy?

MARSDEN. No — *I* have — about you.

(Takes her hand. She smiles, and MARSDEN *looks toward* STEVENS *for approval.* STEVENS *makes a circle with his thumb and forefinger.)*

STEVENS. *(Looking about)* Jeff! Jeff! *(No answer — turns front)* He's disappeared!

JEFF. *(Who has been asleep on the cedar chest — springs up — crosses down Left Center to audience)* Put up your hands! Put up your hands! *(Looks about; gets his bearings.)*

STEVENS. Get me a bandage. *(Pulls bandage from his hand.)*

JEFF. Yes, suh. *(Lifts lid of cedar chest, which is piled to the top with clothing, etc. Takes a bandage from top of pile.)*

STEVENS. *(As* JEFF *starts to bandage his hand)* Marsden, we've got to change that play.

MARSDEN. Change it? *Good heavens — no!*

ALICE. Why do you want to change it?

STEVENS. Because I'm a producer — and by heaven I'm going to act like one! *(Picks up script; opens it at page one)* Now let's start at the beginning of this thing —

FAST CURTAIN

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THE GORILLA

PROPERTY PLOT

ACT ONE

Mantel and ornaments
(Empire clock—2 candelabra and candles)
Grandfather's clock (in hall)
Large 6 ft. chest with lock (L.)
Small library table (C. with drawer)
Cabinet radio (R.)
2 arm chairs
4 single chairs
Coffee table near table C.
Secretary desk up C.
Telephone on secretary desk.
1 large family portrait of woman over mantel.
Caribou head on wall over chest up L.
2 large rugs — 3 extra rugs.
Fire-irons.
Carpet for stairs.
Tray with 2 cocktail glasses off R.1.
Glass vase on radio R.C.
Decanter of whiskey off R.1.
Matchbox and stand table C.
2 whiskey glasses off R.1.
Cocktail shaker off R.1.
Magazines, books, book-ends and newspaper on table C.
Small notebook and pencil (SIMMONS)
Humidor with cigars on table C.
Motor horn — off L.
Doorbell — off C.
Giant Grecian vase (pithos) up R.C.
Velour drapes and valance — arch L.C.

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Scrim curtains — windows L.C.
Strip of paper across windows up L.C.
Brief case and script off L. (MARSDEN)
2 identical lounging robes, bizarre — STEVENS and STRANGER off R.
Coat hangers in closet R.2.
Hat boxes, etc. in closet.
Paper with gorilla's hand print — in table drawer C.
Other papers — in desk.
Tap bell on desk C.
Desk set — Secretary desk up C.
Cocktail glass on tray off R.
2 pistols. (MULLIGAN and GARRITY)
Speed Graphic camera (SIMMONS — trick) flashlight attachment.
Small tray, napkin and sandwiches off R.
Glass crash off R.
1 sure-fire revolver off R. — (STAGE MANAGER)
Clock strike and beater — off stage C.
1 pistol. (STRANGER — a large shiny one)
Practical handcuffs and key (GARRITY — trick)
Large silk handkerchief (GARRITY)
Pocket flashlight. (MARSDEN)
Focussing flashlight off R.
Small "buzzing" device (MARSDEN)
Keys on ring (MULLIGAN)
1 police whistle (GARRITY)
Smash effect off R. (Panes of glass)
Cover for library table C.
Door slam off L.
Silk curtain on rods — glass door R.1.
Roll bandage (STEVENS)
Carpet or large rug on floor.
Vase and flowers — desk up C.

ACT TWO

Pocket flashlight (GARRITY)
Door sound off L.

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Trick camera (SIMMONS—Same as Act I)
Extra pistol for (MULLIGAN)
Sure-fire pistol off L.
Sure-fire pistol (above stairs) R.
Skeleton.
Battle axe.
Long sword.
Police whistle (GARRITY)
Gorilla's arm.
Folding screen.

ACT THREE

White hooded canvas sheet (GARRITY)
Dummy. Figure of man wrapped in white canvas sheet (Understage).
2 flashlights — (MARSDEN and MULLIGAN)
Piece of Sailor's jacket (SIMMONS)
Small cylinder shaped gas bomb (MARSDEN)
Sure-fire pistol (SIMMONS)
Handcuffs and key (trick) Double Act I (MULLIGAN)
Sure-fire gun off L.
Piece of Alice's dress (SIMMONS)
Large roll of bills (STRANGER)
Sure-fire pistol — (STRANGER) (Same as Act I)
Doctor's bag containing bottles and bandages (DOCTOR)
Man's large overcoat or raincoat (ALICE)
Artificial gorilla's arm (STEVENS)
Large white mitten covered with bandage to wear over Stevens' hand.
Old fashioned oil lamp (SIMMONS)

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THE GORILLA

LIGHT CUES

ACT ONE

RISE:

All lights out—except strip (1 light) off R.1 *which shines across stage striking F.P. and Radio.*

Foots
Border
Hall strip off C.
Bunch back window-hall
Brackets
} OUT

AT CUE:

As Jeff pulls chain to table lamp (Signal from stage manager)

Hall strip (2 lights)
Bunch back window at foot stairs (Blue)
#5-6-7-8—X-rays (Amber)
#1—X-ray on radio (Amber)
Table lamp
X-rays to mark
} ON

Shutters on spots 5-6-7-8 you strike and spread from L.C. to R.C. (#6 and 7 are pink—all other X-rays —amber)

AT CUE—ALICE (As she enters double doors, R.C.)

"He loves to stay up all night."

Foots on, up ¼

AT CUE—JEFF

"Mr. Mulligan and Mr. Garrity." (Jeff pushes switch)

Foots ¼ up and borders up to mark

Bracks on

All spots on as set.

#12—Door R. 1st (Amber)

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#9 —Doors R.C. (Amber)
#4 —Strikes L.C. straight down (Amber)
#2 —Arm chair L. (Amber)
#3 —Chair up L.C. and secretary up C.
#10—Chair R. table C.
#11—R. of chair R. of table C. (R.C.)
Set lights for table lamp one
AT CUE:
Pistol shot—off R.I.—strip light off R.I. off.
AT CUE:
Clock strikes twelve (After 12th strike)
AT CUE:
SCREAM FROM ALICE (SIGNAL LIGHT)
LIGHTS UP TO TABLE LAMP MARK
AT CUE from Stranger:
"—all of three hours."
(turns switch)
LIGHTS OUT BLACK
AT CUE from MARSDEN: "Garrity."
(MULLIGAN turns switch) LIGHTS UP.
AT CUE from Mulligan:
"You keep out of this, Marsden."
LIGHTS OUT BLACK
(Strip off in room R.I. ON AFTER COUNT 3)
AT CUE from Mulligan:
"Turn on those lights" (Garrity turns switch)
LIGHTS UP
AT CUE:
ALICE SCREAMS as she opens chest.
LIGHTS DIM DOWN AND OUT QUICKLY
CURTAIN FLASH UP HOUSE LIGHTS

ACT TWO

AT RISE:
LIGHTS UP TO MARK
AT CUE from SIMMONS: "The same goes for me, sister!"
Foots up ¼

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Border X-rays 5-6-7-8
AT CUE from Marsden:
"I'll get to her *my* way."
FLASH EXPLOSION. LIGHTS OUT.
(PAUSE—count four—FOR BUSINESS)
LIGHTS UP
AT CUE:
Gorilla's entrance with Alice.
Signal from stage manager.
SAME MOVEMENT:
DIM STAGE LIGHTS DOWN AND OUT
BRING UP GORILLA SPOT
AT CUE:
Stage manager (Signal)
SPOT DIM DOWN AND OUT QUICKLY—
BLACKOUT
CURTAIN
FLASH UP HOUSE LIGHTS

ACT THREE

AT RISE:
STAGE BLACK
NOTE: Close up spot #2 (Gorilla spot)
(ONE light strip in cellar under chest—(Green on throughout)
Switch at switchboard with signal light in cellar for cues for man working trap
AT CUE from Mulligan:
"I ain't found a sign of Garrity."
FOOTS AND BORDERS UP TO MARK
(Foot ¼ up—5-6-7-8—Border)
AT CUE from Simmons:
"I don't believe anybody's seen a gorilla."
GREEN STRIP OUTSIDE WINDOW c. (ON)
AT CUE—Shot off stage
GREEN STRIP OFF
AT CUE—Sailor's Exit
DIM BORDERS ½ FOR GORILLA BUS.
AT CUE—Simmons Exit

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ONE LIGHT STRIP—LIGHT (STRAW) (OFF R.I. ON)
SMOKE SET FOR UNDER TRAP CELLAR
AT CUE from Marsden:
"Sh-h-h! Quiet! (Clangor of Chinese gong—he pulls chain)
FOOTS AND BORDERS AND HANGING LAMP DIM DOWN AN OUT
(Only light on scene is strip off R.I.L. and green strip under chest lid)
AT CUE from Marsden:
"Now Mr. Mulligan and Garrity." (Pulls chain)
LIGHTS UP TO MARK
AT CUE from Stevens:
"And it will get me out again." (Pulls chain)
LIGHTS OUT BLACK
Signal from stage manager to House Electrician—Working lights up for positions
AT CUE during change from stage manager
PUT IN BLUE FOOTS
AT CUE from stage manager
BLUE FOOTS FULL UP—PINK AND AMBER FOOTS UP TO LOW MARK
AT CUE—Shot in audience
ALL FOOTS OUT
SHOTS ON STAGE
WORKING LIGHTS OUT FOR CURTAIN UP
AS CURTAIN RISES ON SECOND SCENE (STAGE DARK)
AT CUE AS MARSDEN STARTS TO SPEAK
SPOT UP ON HIS FACE (L. of table C.)
AS STEVENS SPEAKS
SPOT ON HIS FACE (R. of table C.)
BORDERS UP ½ AND LIGHTS AS SET (NO FOOTS)
UP ON DIMMERS TO MARK
NOTE: This is a 1-2-3 movement—spot-spot-borders.
AS CURTAIN STRIKES STAGE
THROW ON FOOTS ½ FOR CALLS

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NEW YORK CRITIC COMMENTS ON

THE GORILLA

N. Y. Times:	"The audience remained five minutes after the fall of the curtain to cheer."
Daily Mirror:	"Smash hit. Better reserve your seats early."
Evening World:	"Audience rocked and shrieked with laughter."
Eve. Telegram:	"Horrific, gusty, screamingly funny. All Manhattan must have heard what success *The Gorilla* won."
Eve. Journal:	"The audience screamed with laughter and excitement."
Evening Sun:	"The audience gave all the affable outcries which spell success."
American:	"Audience responded with guffaws."
Wm. Lyon Phelps:	"Everybody ought to see *The Gorilla,* because everybody will enjoy it."
Journal of Commerce:	"One of the most amusing mystery farces ever concocted."
Burns Mantle, *Daily News:*	"In the end there is a surprise finish that startles the girls into excited clutches of escorts' arms. You can have a lot of fun at the Selwyn."
John Anderson in *Eve. Post:*	"Hilariously funny."

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COMMENTS BY CRITICS IN OTHER CITIES

Ralph Bellamy revels in the role of the playwright. The author extracts a thrill and a chill from every situation and then for the final fillup tosses a "wow" laugh that is essentially comedy at the expense of the situation played a moment before.—*Des Moines Register*

The Gorilla was enthusiastically received, scores being turned away."—*Billings (Mont.) Gazette*

The creation of those two sapient limbs of the law, Mulligan and Garrity, almost entitles Spence to immortality. They are delicious.—Warren in *San Francisco Chronicle*

Last evening's audience fairly shrieked, shouted and laughed.—*Boston Globe*

Anyone who goes to the Belasco is in for a merry evening."—*Washington Post.*

Pandemonium broke loose at the Shubert Theatre last night at the opening performance of *The Gorilla.* It is hilarious entertainment.—*Cincinnati Inquirer*

The folks out front react magnificently to the playwright's every suggestion. They laugh when they are supposed to laugh. They shudder when they are supposed to shudder. And, as my ears are my witness, they scream when they are supposed to scream. It is a pleasure to sit and watch them.—Robert Garland in *Baltimore American*

It is a good mystery play, as many hundreds of Detroiters know, because the comedy element predominates without in the least depreciating the play's merits as a thriller.—*Detroit Free Press.*

Seldom has the Teek Theatre rung with laughter and quivered with excitment as it did last night for the opening performance in Buffalo of Ralph Spence's *The Gorilla—Buffalo (N. Y.) Post.*

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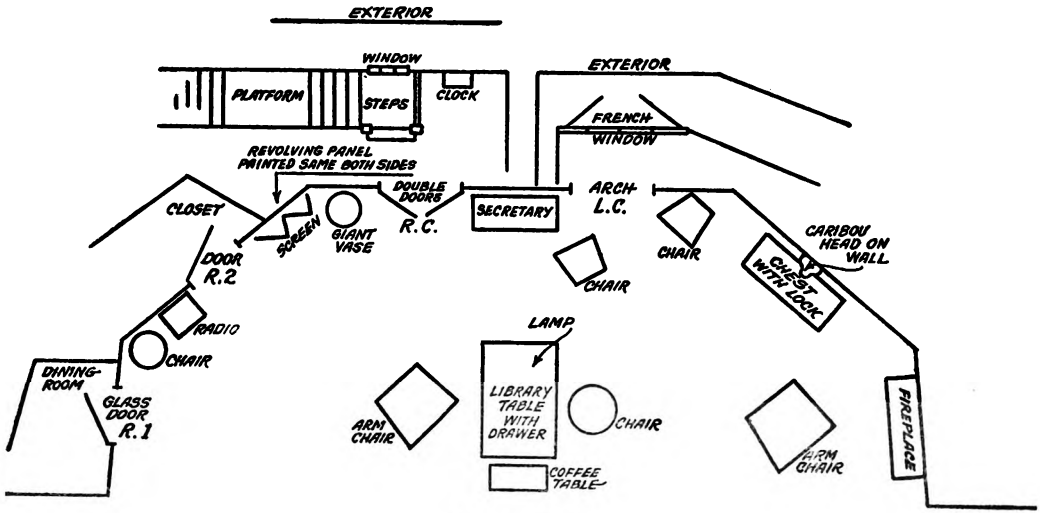

SCENE DESIGN

"THE GORILLA"

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MR. AND MRS. NORTH

Mystery-comedy. 3 acts. By Owen Davis, based on the stories by Frances and Richard Lockridge. 16 males, 4 females. Interior. Modern costumes.

Amateurs may now enjoy the comedy which delighted New York and summer theatre audiences for months. Pam and Gerald North are a pleasant young married couple living in Greenwich Village in New York. Upon their return to the apartment after a brief absence, Gerald opens his closet door—and out falls the dead body of a strange man. The police are called and the investigation starts. All their friends are suspected and even Pam and Gerald have difficulty in explaining certain things to the inspector. Gerald is worried, but Pam is pleased to be thought so naughty. It is Pam who finally unmasks the murderer with her ingenious accusations, and of course, the explanations follow in quick order. "I like it. These are real folk caught in a web of plausible and amusing situations. There is laughter in it and a touch of sentiment, a craftily sustained suspense."—*N. Y. Daily News.*

(Royalty, $35.00.)

THE PHILADELPHIA STORY

Comedy. 3 acts. By Philip Barry. 9 males, 6 females. Interior. Modern costumes.

The smash hit of Broadway and Hollywood with Katharine Hepburn in the leading role. Tracy Lord is a cold beauty who has divorced C. K. Dexter Haven of her own set and is about to be married to Kittredge, a successful young snob. Unpleasant circumstances, hinging on her father's dissatisfaction with the lack of understanding and warmth in her character, force Tracy to allow her very fashionable wedding to be photographed and reported by a worldly-wise camera-woman and a class-conscious young reporter who is really a fine writer. After the pre-wedding party, Tracy and the reporter share a swift and illuminating look at themselves and take a moonlight dip in the pool. Tracy, somewhat thawed and thinking with vivid clarity, calls off the wedding to Kittredge, and after refusing the reporter's proposal, decides to remarry Dexter Haven, promising in future to be a human being. "The dialogue is smart . . . rapid, sparkling, and rich in wit." —*New York World-Telegram.*

(Royalty, $50.00.)

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THE LATE CHRISTOPHER BEAN

Comedy. 3 acts. By Sidney Howard. 5 males, 4 females. Interior. Modern costumes.

Produced by Gilbert Miller in New York and elsewhere, this is one of the outstanding successes of the theater season of 1932-33. The comedy has to do with a family of New Englanders who have. years before, given refuge to a great artist. The play opens some years after Bean's death, with an excited world in pursuit of his work and any details they can gather as to his life and character. Dr. Haggett and his family, who have some of Bean's canvases, suddenly realize their value, and become hard, selfish, and ill-tempered. It is, however, Abby, the family servant, who ultimately holds them all in her power: she has one of his greatest paintings, which she cannot be persuaded into selling or giving away; it turns out that she is the only one who really understood and appreciated the artist—besides, she had been married to him. An ideal play for colleges and Little Theaters.

(Royalty, $25.00.)

THE MALE ANIMAL

Comedy. 3 acts. By James Thurber and Elliot Nugent. 8 males, 5 females. Interior. Modern costumes.

A smash hit in New York City. Tommy Turner has been married for ten years to Ellen, and he is quietly settled in a nice comfortable teaching job at Mid-Western University. But this is the week-end of the Michigan game, and Joe Ferguson, the greatest football hero Mid-Western ever had, comes to town, and of course, sees Ellen to whom he used to be sort of unofficially engaged. In addition Tommy, because he wants to read a letter to his composition class written by Vanzetti is about to have to join the ranks of the martyrs who got fired because the trustees are shouting "Red!" so loud they can't hear an idea tinkle. Eventually Tommy challenges Joe to fisticuffs. Also, he refuses to deny that he will read the Vanzetti letter and decides to stand on his principle of the freedom of ideas and the right to teach the young to think. Ellen now sees that he is a pretty good example of the male animal, and stands up with him. ". . . dismisses you from the theatre in a spirit of dazed hilarity."—N. Y. *Times.*

(Royalty, $50.00.)

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